



*By MRS. MARY E. LAMB*



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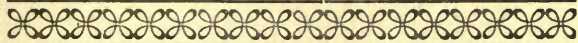
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# IRENE LISCOMB

A STORY OF THE  
OLD SOUTH

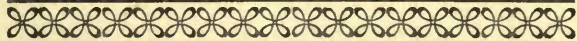
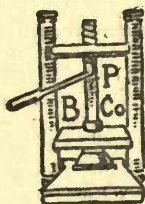


...By...

MRS. MARY E. LAMB

*Author of*

*"The Mystery of Walderstein"*



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## IRENE LISCOMB

### I.

#### REHEARSING FOR THE WEDDING.

There was hardly ever a more perfect blonde than this Southern girl, with her graceful, self-poised personality. Her bride's outfit was all finished; even the last package of toilet knick-knacks had been received from Philadelphia, and duly commented on by her nearest friends.

The house party had been assembled for two days already. Games, and the ball, which was yet to occur before the departure of the interesting couple, were enthusiastically discussed. In the grand old mahogany room of the large plantation house, the bridal gown had been spread out on the bed for a last inspection of its rich lace, and silken, vapory fabric. The veil was rose point lace; one her mother had worn. It had been manufactured at Venice.

"No, no, I cannot try it on. It is bad luck to try on the wedding dress and remove it before being married in it," asserted the bride-to-be.

"Dat's right, Mis' Rene. Bad luck come sho' if you puts on dat weddin' dress," ventured the black mammy, always a privileged character at

Major Liscomb's. "Doan you put on dose close dress now; uf you all will scuse dis nigga for intertrudin' huh mouf."

The girls laughed at the earnestness of the woman; making some demur, however, at the bride's decision.

"What an awkward situation there will turn up," ventured one, "if the gown cannot be worn at the last moment."

"And suppose it is too tight, and cannot be hooked," suggested another.

"And the bride should faint," continued another.

"I shall risk all these dreadful happenings," said the beautiful bride.

Another declared, "I shall be in a terror until I see Rene on the arm of Captain Stone, marching towards the parlor to the strains of Lohengrin, I'm sure, if she doesn't try on that gown, and teach that train how to behave."

The air of superstition obtruded again and again amid the merry suggestions and proposals.

"Don't let us forget to snip the thorns from her bouquet, girls, so she'll not start wildly when the bridegroom takes the other hand," laughingly warned the bridesmaid to be, putting on a look of mock terror.

"Now, further to avoid bad luck, we've got to have for Rene to wear,

'Something old, something new,  
Something borrowed, something blue.'"

"Well, what can a bride wear in blue, I should

like to know," said Alice Wood, a sprightly brunette.

"Nothing that I can think of, unless she gather pale blue satin around her garters——"

"And cuts them into bits, then divides them with the nearest, and the highest of the guests after the ceremony," continued some one, laughing, "as the Princess brides of the Hohenzollerns do."

"Really, do they do that in Germany, Annie Miller?"

"Yes, it is done at Imperial weddings in Prussia, and the Lord Chamberlain states it, in his royally authorized report of the ceremonies for publication. Of course, hers not being sufficient, others also are provided for distribution."

"Rene, will you wear blue ones?"

"Yes, but I shall keep mine afterwards, for luck."

For the "Something borrowed" were quickly volunteered different articles; for it was deemed lucky to have a bride wear something belonging to one, as the owner would be the next to be married, so said the proverbs.

Finally, the old article was chosen from the mother's old possessions. It was a tiny ivory side comb, once before worn at the bridal ceremony.

"Do let us try on the gown, please, Rene," begged Annie Miller, and a chorus joined in, "Please, do!"

"I shall not try on the gown," rather decidedly answered the beautiful girl, and they nonchalantly went waltzing, and singing toward the



music room, where the bridal song was put under rehearsal.

The gentlemen guests returned from the forest, where they had been smoking and shooting the most of the morning. Riding on horseback, and in carriages, took up the hours of the late afternoon. A play was rendered next day; and cards and readings occupied some hours. The ball was reserved for the post-nuptial affair, before the going away hour. It was a happy time for all concerned; and some hearts in the merry throng were already wondering how soon might their own nuptials occur, and who would the other party be.

The very choicest scuppernong had been set to one side in the wine cellar for this festive time, and was now served very pompously by the blacks to "Mis' Rene's gran' company," as the young people were called by Mammy Nance, and her fellow servitors.

"Marse Major and Mis' Riah 'joyed deyselves dess lak de res' of um," good-naturedly said they, smiling significantly among themselves, as they smacked their lips over the remaining scuppernong.

Long had they looked forward to this time of good things; and éclat, for Captain Budd Stone's song was mighty lively. The particular day approached, the day of rehearsal.

The plantation being far from any point of travel by public conveyance, the Reverend Charles Ferdinand Torrence and his brown valet came by horse in the afternoon. The arrival created

a new excitement in the household, and "sobered" the party a little.

Annie Miller declared it started the shivers up her back, for it looked now as if there certainly would be a "sure enough" wedding.

Another said "How lovely it all is! How nice to be on the verge of getting married!" though really all of them grew a shade graver and more thoughtful in demeanor towards evening.

Later, when the supper was served, and the dainty beaten biscuit and fresh honey passed, and all the other special dishes the negro cooks prided themselves on, were set before the gay party, Captain Stone and Irene Liscomb were surely a bride and groom to be greatly complimented by their almost worshipping admirers, so one and all openly declared.

"How handsome they were! How perfectly mated they seemed! Happiness was certainly theirs forever!"

Such thoughts found place in the serene mind of the Reverend Charles Ferdinand Torrence, as he supped with this merry throng at the plantation of Major and Mrs. Liscomb, whose happiness had been completed by their son's arrival from a Northern college, but that hour.

After the smoke on the veranda, and a number of college anecdotes, both of a former time when Mr. Torrence had attended, and of this later epoch, the gentlemen joined the ladies in the music room. Ned Liscomb led the concert with a lively college song, but gave as encore a more important air, at that time very much in vogue in high music circles, and pronounced by

Mr. Torrence as "Colossal!" in imitation of his German university days.

"No slouch!" added Ned, falling into affirmative slang.

The concert lengthened itself out, and ended with some old time song complimentary, and in deference to the elder persons present.

Then the event of the evening became evident in the momentary, breathless silence suddenly pervading the apartment, and the subsiding of the remaining guests to the lower end of the room.

The pianist, with strong, martial movement, commenced the wedding march from Lohengrin, finally lowering the strains as the ceremony was supposed to progress.

The maid of honor, who should bear the bride's bouquet to-morrow, and the bride's maids, who should bear white empire staffs wound with pink roses, and the train bearers, followed. Bride and groom, dignified and thoughtful, took their places. All were shown positions for to-morrow's pageant. A grand burst from Mendelssohn's March, and the rehearsal was finished. Even the scramble for the bride's bouquet had been imagined.

It was to take place in the center of the parlors, the bride was to toss it from an elevation. Much speculation was rife as to who indeed should the lucky one be; the first of those assembled to get it, thereby being the next one married.

It remained only to drape the white tulle and smilax and place the flowers to-morrow morning for the grand affair.

Alone in the soft moonlight, a mocking bird wildly trilling, twittering, whistling divine notes, the lovers had a fervent parting that night on the balcony of the old plantation house of Major Liscomb.

She lingered for some time in the air after he was gone; and her heart, thrilling with the fulsome joy in it, longed to burst into the song of the happy mocking bird, yet filling the pale quiet moonlight with melody.

How proud and handsome he had seemed—more grand than ever! His tall physique and military bearing always charmed her. To-night his fine tenor voice was full of pathos—beyond any height he had ever attained, in the glorious duet they had sung together.

In her passionate, arduous love dream she had given herself over to a rhapsody. "He is mine—wholly mine!" her lips involuntarily murmured.

A whippoorwill had flown nearer the house from the long, narrow, swamp-like thicket not far from the spot, and was rapidly and sharply whistling "Whippoorwill! Whippoorwill! Whippoorwill!" from the magnolia's branches. No one called this tangle a swamp, for lively spring branches kept the water in a brisk circulation. The gum trees supported masses of mistletoe in their high tops, and gray moss swung from other trees. Turkey buzzards and wild turkeys roosted in dense rendezvous in the lonely shadows. Echoes slumbered in its forests.

## II.

## AN UNEXPECTED DISAPPEARANCE.

Captain Budd Stone had mounted his horse, and ridden away from Major Liscomb's house in an ecstasy of happiness that night. The plantation of his uncle, where he lived, was but four miles away from that of the Liscomb family, yet it was morning when his sleepy valet, whom he had sent ahead, let him into the house. To the astonishment of his man, he staggered to his chamber, apparently almost unable to get there at all, like one intoxicated.

An hour or so later, clad in his traveling suit, he mounted Dan, a horse with an enviable record for speed, and rode away—forever!

At breakfast it was learned that a letter had been left for "Brown Joe" to deliver, some time in the forenoon, at the plantation house of his affianced. The time indefinite. Strange!

The relatives were simply stunned; no explanation was vouchsafed to anyone! and they could learn nothing of the meaning of the proceeding whatever.

It put the household into an unwonted turmoil. As the morning fled away, the mysterious conduct of the usually punctillious Captain, took on monstrous proportions; for certainly it meant



an uncereemonious postponement of the nuptials.

Time was passing, and the Stones must be over at the mansion before the hour of high noon, of course. Curiosity rose high. Only that the letter was gone, it would now be read by the groom's relatives, who restlessly paced up and down the veranda, and the paths of the rose garden.

"What dishonor had he inflicted on her, and on them? What dishonor had he discovered against her?" they whispered with bated breath.

"Something—surely something! A fine way to treat her, and a contemptible way to leave his friends in the lurch!" said Mrs. Stone scornfully.

"I curse him—I *curse him!*" declared the uncle, his face purpling with rage, and fists tightly clenched, his whole body trembling with anger, as he fairly stamped upon the gravelly path.

Brown Joe returned now from the neighboring plantation, almost pale with what he had witnessed during the fulfilment of his commission.

"What is it, Joe? What has happened?" asked the two elderly ones in one breath, going hurriedly toward the gate.

"Ah b'lieves Mis' Rene is daid, sho daid! She looked at dat papah, dat ah done gib huh, a long, long time lak she could ha'dly make it out. Purty soon she swayed dis day, den dat way, an' she done fell out lak she's sho nuff daid. Dey all run towa'ds her a-hollerin. Den nex' ah knows dem niggahs ober dar dey tuk aftah me, lookin' mad an' mighty mean, an' day say sorta low, "You git!" Cose, ah didn' stay, for dey 'sco'ted

me to de road, pinted out de big gate, an' tell me agin, madder an' madder, "Now you git! You trabel, d'yo heah? You Yankee trash!" Dey's right much in earnest, ah reckon, suh, an' a niggah hel' dat gate open fuh me to pass th'ough it, while dey all yells out mighty loud dis time, 'Niggah, you git!'"

Brown Joe had been up North with Captain Stone sometimes, and the blacks imagined that he had put on airs ever since; so they were glad to get a chance to humiliate him now.

Somehow it had dawned upon them that he had been the bearer of bad tidings, causing Miss Rene dire woe, and they were ready to resent it, tooth and nail; hence, were delighted to call him the hated name, Yankee.

"Dat imperdent white niggah of Marse Budd's 'magine hisse'f gitten whiter an' whiter, cos he's ben up Nawth, an' et his vittals 'longside white folks. Reckon dey was on'y some po' white trash dat et 'longside Brown Joe, howsumever," scornfully related one of them.

"Joe he say dey calls him 'Mistah Stone' all de time he up Nawth," said another as they returned to the Liscomb house, that they had so hurriedly left.

"Looks mighty lak deys goin' to be no weddin' up to de house now, lak all go to smash, 'cause er somepin in dat er papah whut she look at."

"Whut d'y' reckon dey'll do 'bout all dem good things dey got to eat, now?"

"G'long 'way Pete! Specs you done tastin' em dess a'ready. Dey is a mighty lot of em, ah say, boy."

"Dey wus right many chickens sp'ilt mixin' up dat salad stuff; and, roasted apples, to put in dat Kaintucky whiskey, dess tuck out de oven, and piled on dat big turkey platter, yum, yum!" and Tom's mouth already watered with anticipation of the savory cup.

"De peach le cure's ben already opened, an' dey dahsent 'tempt to shet it up agin, 'cause *it kin be drunk at de qua'ters, ah reckon,*" and Sam Thomson looked anxious and meaningly at his comrades.

"Yessah, it can be pahtaken of, Mistah Thomson, ah reckon!"

As they neared the stricken house, their faces grew long, and they assumed their usual house manners. Couriers were already starting out to other plantations to announce that the wedding had been indefinitely postponed. This quartet was assigned another route, on the same commission, by Major Liscomb.

Ned mounted his horse, started towards the Stone plantation, with hardly any defined intention. He could not speak. Like everybody else, he was dumb with astonishment. He had, however, dropped a revolver into his pocket, and thought himself very calm, but the deadly calm was dangerous.

Reverend Charles Ferdinand Torrence had followed the young student into the court; as he was about to mount his horse he laid his hand earnestly upon his arm, and with solemn and trembling voice, said,

"Ned, be a man; be a righteous, strong man.

'Vengeance is mine,' said the Lord. God be with you!"

Ned made no answer. He wished Mr. Torrence had not come out; had not spoken. It seemed no time to consider peaceful, holy measures; and, as he crossed the saddle, he said to himself, "Torrence knows it just as well as I do; I saw it in his demeanor, plainly. I know any man would act as I am acting, even Torrence."

As he sped over the four miles that intervened between the two plantation houses at a break-neck speed, his blood fairly foamed with fury. One thing, and only one, stood out in his mind, clear and sharp as lightning, and that was the insult that had been put upon his family, upon the honor of his sister. He had assured himself that she still lived before he set out on his mission of vengeance.

Perhaps it had been better if she were already dead; for it seemed to him that the look on her face, as she revived from her swoon, showed no trace of mind; only an idiotic, bewildered grin! He gulped, he gasped, as possibilities shaped themselves in his maddened imagination. He rode faster! He flung open gates, and left them so!

He approached the veranda at last. Then he met the uncle on the broader walk of the rose garden; so excited, neither could speak for a moment. He saw the aunt leaning on her arms over a table on the veranda, from her chair, her body heaving with emotion. The truth dawned upon him. Stone was truly gone, and they had

nothing to do with the humiliating facts whatever. He was baffled, disappointed.

All the circumstances were frankly told him; Captain Stone had truly disappeared, as certainly as if the earth had swallowed him up, without any explanation to his venerable relatives.

"God will make it plain some day, Neighbor Ned," said the humiliated old man.

"The Lord help us!" gasped faintly the aunt, sobbing and sobbing helplessly.

"Bear our deepest regrets to your family, I beg you, Mr. Ned," added Nathan Stone.

Ned could hardly bring himself to make any show of politeness to the couple, though he raised his hand a time or two involuntarily, as if intending to respectfully touch his hat as he rode, nonplussed and confused, away.

At the boundary line of the plantations, he met the three other young men who had followed him from the house of sudden and mysterious affliction.

They halted with questioning looks on their faces, rather gratified at the apparent outcome of Ned's mad errand.

"Hurry, boys, let's begone quick! I've seen where his horse left the main road. Damn him, I'm not done with him, as sure as my name is Ned Liscomb!"

"Hold, Ned, hold on, I say. Wait! Here is what Rene—Miss Rene says. She started us to overtake you and ask you to do no violence—not to pay any attention to Stone."

"You go to—Lew Martyn. She has not come to her senses enough to know what she's talking



about. I mean to overtake him to-day. He may have a chance to explain—he may not,” said Ned Liscomb in animated tone.

“I should surely listen to my sister. It’s her affair,” interrupted Lew Martyn, dismounting as if he meant not to follow, for one, at least.

“Ned, boy, be reasonable. Treat that ass with silent contempt. I know that is what Miss Rene wants you to do,” entreated the groom’s best man. “Trust her judgment in this.”

All had dismounted but Ned, who could not submit his will to the dominance of his young friends at once. He turned again towards his father’s house, saying,

“I’ll go home and see Sis, at any rate. Damn him!”

A calmness succeeded this tempest of excitement; speculation became rampant. It was figured out that between the time Stone left Major Liscomb’s place, and the almost hour of dawn, when he had been admitted to the house of his uncle in such a state of collapse, something extraordinary had undoubtedly happened to him. What could it have been?

The Reverend Charles Ferdinand Torrence was going away as the quartet of manhunters were returning, a bit sheepishly, to the house. He assured himself that all was well, and rode on.

Most of the guests of the house party had already gone away, finding it more suitable to Miss Rene, who could meet none of them before going, remaining in bed, in her own room.

Ned’s mother took him immediately to his sis-

ter, the three companions having mutely waived a parting with him at the outer gate. Rene started up, questioning him rebukingly,

"Oh, Ned, you haven't—you haven't done any mad thing, have you? Look at me! Have you?"

"No, Sis, he was really gone!"

"Read that note, Ned. You did not wait to read it! See the handwriting! He was crazy—crazy! Can't you see that in the scribble he has made of it? He broke the promise unwillingly."

"I shall not forget the suffering he has caused you, Rene. I know what it is."

"It is over. I promise you not to suffer, if only you will pay no attention to the affair. I shall put him away from my thoughts forever, Ned! Forever, yes, forever!"

Rene choked hard as she uttered the words. He could not answer for a minute, then said,

"So, Rene, it is a compact. Away forever!" and he repeated the words slowly and earnestly, and she followed him with low and hoarse voice, "*Away forever!*" though her face had grown whiter than snow, and she saw nothing about her for a long time; in fact, she believed she was dying!

What had changed Captain Budd Stone? Ned left the room, almost falling in a collapse himself from the nerve tension and excited events of the wretched morning. His mother tried to influence him to be calm, but he was feverishly nervous.

## III.

## THE HORRORS OF WAR.

Affairs soon took their wonted course at the plantation. Mammy Nance was to have gone, as maid, to the new home along with Miss Rene. Each bride had that much of the old home surroundings when she left the home of her mother in that day. That was the invariable custom.

Nance was a little put out when the wedding fell through, but no mention of the affair ever crossed her lips, nor did she tolerate a word from the other servants.

Tongues wagged in the county for a while, but all their fabrications were toppled over by the all absorbing topic of war, now dominating everything else in the land. War between the Northern and Southern sections of the country seemed longer unavoidable. Everybody went from home armed.

Disputes, personal encounters in the Halls of Congress had occurred. A new Confederation was under consideration. A secession of the South from the North had been declared by some Southern States, soon to be followed by most of the rest of them falling into their ranks.

The Southern Confederacy was organized finally, a President and Cabinet chosen.

Slavery could not be extended into the territories by law, and was being tried by ruffianism. Border warfare shot down good and law-abiding citizens and terrorized the others who came in their way.

A storm was gathering, whose dimensions and roar would shake the civilized world. Secession from the North was now a fact. Slavery caused the rupture. Slavery must go. There had been talk of the United States Government buying the slaves and freeing them. This was not listened to. The institution of slavery had outgrown any possibility of its long existence, though it dragged out a few more months.

Fort Sumter was fired on by the South. Then United States President Lincoln called out seventy-five thousand troops, and the war was on.

The Rebellion was in full blast. War, with all its hideousness, its demoralizing, unspeakable ruin, was precipitated; God knows why, upon brothers of one blood, one country, with its madness and curse. And the seller and the buyer of slaves held responsible.

Strains of military music sounded everywhere. Some remote, some near by. In every town and village, North or South, every heart was bursting with patriotism, and felt wild to be away to the front.

The Union must be preserved at all hazards. The new Confederacy must be maintained at all hazards. And so, in the supreme purposes, men left the hearthstone; provident, or improvident; the bedside of new-born babe, the shop, the farm, the professions, in this pell mell rush to

enlist in the ranks to slay his brother, as the purpose might call him.

What had woman to do in the business on hand? Flags were made, lint was scraped, and bandages were rolled by women, who could raise no word of remonstrance against this savagery!

They would themselves go and join their patriotic brothers, to die beside them if need be, if only permitted.

After the first blast of the tempest, some of the cooler blooded remained at home, a few to criticize, to handicap the warriors by treachery. (It is some people's nature to be ever on the other side.) The Northerners of this type were called "Copperheads" and "Butternuts!" The Southerners generally invited these opponents of their rank to "Git;" and with show of tar and feathers, inclined them to travel to more agreeable climates. If found traitors, going over to the Yankees, they were promptly strung up!

The army was source enough surely for labor and expense, without these unexpected evils to both North and South. But that was another consequence of the demoralized conditions brought about by war. Powder and ball soon backed up this family quarrel, and thousands of precious human lives were blotted out! And new cemeteries filled to overflowing. Every home, North or South, was in mourning in the fair land. Deep mourning!

There was none to raise grain, and food was scarce. The blockade cut off the imports.

The negro was quitting the tobacco and cotton fields in squads. Especially was it hard on the



South, for the invader's stores not being always at hand, he devoured whatever fell under his eye or his hand; the stores of his enemy.

Even salt was impossible sometimes. One family dug up the drippings—soaked soil from the smoke house, where salted meat had hung, and boiled and strained it to get a taste of seasoning for their boiled herbs, or chance bird, or fish. This was South.

In the North, parched wheat and sweet potatoes made the coffee supply. Dry goods rose to enormous prices. Cheese cloths and unbleached muslins dyed with walnut juice were luxuries for the well-to-do. Estates, very many involved by debt and mortgage, never survived the expense of this experiment, two governments in one country.

Woe to the dame who undertook to defend a pullet, a cow or a calf from some squad or foraging gang of deserters from either army, or the run-away blacks from other plantations, or from real soldiers whose officers were not looking on at the moment. That dame might get all the buildings of the isolated plantation burned, and her cattle slaughtered before her eyes. Hard consequence of war, which perhaps she had no hand in bringing about, but that is the other side of noble war, and yet a very certain one always.

The negro was impatient to try this new thing, freedom, that they were told the Yankee was bringing him. They cared little if the Yankee was a thief, a murderer, as was also told them, for at Major Liscomb's plantation one day, as this army approached, Sam Thomson whispered

to Pete, "Dey is mos' heah; dey is ovah at Shady Grove dis minute. Dey is comin' to git us."

"Thank de Lord. Hallelujah! Jesus!"

Then with the next breath he said to Miss Rene, with all the pomp of loyalty,

"Yessum, ah'll shoot 'em sho if dey come heah. Ah'll git dem scamps."

Major Liscomb sent the negroes to some other part of the grounds while he and the women ran to the cellar with the boxes of silverware. There was not time to store them in an old grave in the family burying ground, as they had meant to, if soldiers should be expected their way. In the cellar was another, a wine cellar, all fallen in. They placed the boxes there, threw all the rubbish at hand over them; cans, jugs, bottles, casks, and poured a barrel of the old housekeeper's ashes over the pile.

The mob was not a quarter of mile away when they returned to receive their unwelcome and uninvited guests.

The jewels were hastily packed in as small compass as possible, and hidden in the women's clothing. They looked about upon the grand suites of furniture, the works of art, the rugs, and musical instruments with a helpless sort of weebegone farewell; believing they were in their last hours of existence for them. Especially would it be hard to see their forefather's portraits and mahoganies broken, burned or carried off by the marauders. And the knick-knacks that had been carried home from other lands, souvenirs of travel, go in the general loss.

At last the soldiers in blue, under a captain,

were halting in the shade of the great oaks in front of the mansion. Having a captain signified a little hope to Major Liscomb that they might halt a few minutes, and then march orderly away. It was a very warm day. The troops were not slow in dropping all accoutrements, stacking guns, doffing hats, coats, canteens, and breaking ranks in the superb shade.

Major Liscomb came out on the veranda, and in his fine old Southern manner, saluted the captain, who was already approaching the house.

"Do I meet Captain Ned Liscomb?" he asked, likewise saluting.

"No, no, sir! I'm his father, Major Nathan Liscomb," was answered, "a major in the Mexican War, sir. Whom do I greet?" and he put one hand behind his ear to aid in hearing the pompous officer in blue.

"I am Captain Long of Co. E." The regiment he did not mention, as he did not consider it necessary. "I have been sent to search for Captain Ned Liscomb. It is a disagreeable duty. I can have the freedom of the house, I suppose, sir."

"Certainly, unless you can believe the word of a gentleman. Captain Ned Liscomb is positively not in this house!"

Other men soon joined the captain, and they started on a tour of search through the house.

Then the wrath of the old man knew no bounds. He ordered them from his premises. Called them "Lincoln Dogs;" said "The South had a right to secede from the North to protect their rights. Also said "If Ned Liscomb was

raising a company of soldiers, it was to protect them in the right of secession. Yes, I took the oath of allegiance to the United States Government. Yes, certainly I did, and I ask you to see that my property is protected now as you lead these Lincoln hirelings through my home."

Meanwhile, some of the soldiers had taken the kitchen and cellar under inspection. Picking up whatever they found ready to eat. They went to cellar and to garret, into bedrooms, into the meat house, and meal house on their man hunt. Finally, they all met again in front, and after resting there deliberately for a few minutes, marched away toward the Stone plantation, but "spoiling" to fire into the house.

After midnight another, a decidedly mixed crowd, this time hangers on of the army, who kept at a safe distance from the troops, approached the beautiful mansion. These were of all sorts of ruffians: Northern, Southern and black. Their boisterous and outrageous conduct boded no good, and the only remaining ones in the house struck out for the old cabin in the swamp.

In a few hours the palatial old house was in ashes. The last slave joined this crowd. The other remaining few, Pete, Sam Thomson, Lew Martyn and Tom had followed, some hours before, in the captain's wake, towards the Stone plantation.

Mammy Nance, with one of the old cooks, chose to stick to the destinies of "Marster Ma-Jah" and "Mis' Riah." They were certainly very useful in the miserable days to come.

It never occurred to any of them to try to find the silver. They supposed it all melted up in the bottom of the second cellar. Moreover, they had no place to carry it in their homeless condition. They only hoped that Ned would keep out of reach of those now seeking his arrest here at home. And it was quite possible that he was over in the vicinity of Chattanooga. It had been some days since he had marched away with the company he had raised in that county.

The following night, before it had yet been possible to get out of the parish, they saw the flames from the burning buildings on the Stone's plantation. The fire had also reached the long, slender thicket, called by some the swamp. Its long grasses and shrubbery, its old gum trees, and pines made fine food for the flames, which lighted up miles of territory vividly and for a long time.



## IV.

## NO REMEDY BUT TO FACE IT.

To the parents of Irene Liscomb it was a hard trial to find themselves homeless—everything gone in a night. She was grieved for her parents' sake; it was indeed sad to see what a bitter trial it was for them; for her own sake, it was not.

She did not wish to live longer in the county where she might at any moment hear the name of Captain Budd Stone, or meet his friends, or sometime, meet him.

She could begin life anew in another country, or in a remote part of her own land. The family had long contemplated a sojourn abroad. More than ever it seemed the thing to do, since Major Liscomb had made himself unpopular among his friends, in always doubting the results of the war. He had joined the Secessionists never; but remained among his old neighbors rather than desert Ned, who was an intense Secessionist, and he had a rough time.

The father had tried to save his property from confiscation by taking oath of allegiance to the United States Government. He tried hard not to oppose those who saw things differently from his view of them, and suffered persecutions.

The funds of the South were fast disappearing. The establishment of money of their own was necessary. The issuing of Confederate script bolstered up the prospects of the South for a little time, though really increasing their war debt. All their fortunes had been ventured on the experiment; and the uncertainty of holding on to the slaves was increasing every day. Even so, the new Confederacy was uncertain. Whether Lincoln freed them or not, they would eventually go free; that thing seemed rather certain. Luckily, Major Liscomb had sold and hired out very many of his three hundred slaves, though all the price had not yet been paid in. He was, however, better off than the most of his acquaintances. The slaves were mostly corralled on remote plantations, lodged in pens, and hired, personally, out.

They had become a menace and a useless expense to their masters generally, but they held grimly on to them. Really they would have been glad to be loose from them, as the country now was. But the old pride held out, and they knew no surrender now, more than they knew in the legislative halls in 1860, when they left the Government.

Poorer and poorer they found themselves, with all this slave property on their hands, which now could not be turned into money. Ah, and the youth nearly all sacrificed in the many successful and unsuccessful brave battles!

It was Cousin Jonas Wilson of High Point who came out to the swamp and insisted on

housing the Liscomb family until they could find better quarters.

Cousin Jonas had a family of fifteen children; ten belonged to him and his first wife; five to his second wife (a cousin to him and his first wife) who brought her five to the plantation when she came there as stepmother. Then she and Cousin Jonas had a partnership son, whom they both declared they never counted at all.

"A mighty few eatables are left since the foragers passed over our place, but my wife has yet right many jars of preserved figs and of plums she had hidden fine, which the Yanks did not discover."

"Yes, yes, I've a big family to look after, for there are three yet of the deaf and dumb relatives, though they've means of their own, I must give them attention, you know."

The intermarriages of this family for years and years had made these conditions. It was a typical family of some parts of the South. Cousin Jonas' wife always called him "Cousin Jonas." Indeed he was couined by some not at all related to him by blood. It seemed a complimentary cognomen everywhere. He was a good and important citizen, and the Liscombs were certainly appreciative of the fact, as they were "dug up and taken in," as Miss Rene termed it when they were added to this brimfull house of cousins at Jonas Wilson's.

She declared she was glad to quit their neighbors—the owls, the frogs and the moccasins of the swamp.

That night, the figs and the plums were served

along with biscuits, made of the last white flour left on the plantation. For raising the bread a little lye from some white ashes and some sour milk had been used. The cow had been butchered before their eyes, so there would be no more milk.

"But we've still a house," said the wife. "Cousin Jonas, ask the blessing!"

Tea was made from spicewood twigs, gathered from fence corners. The welcome meal was declared a feast by the homeless and hungry party. How comfortable it would be to sleep to-night on a bed, though that bed were taken from one of the cousins.

A twinge of conscience would have rebuked them, but they could feel nothing; they were too worn out with the mental and physical tortures of the last hours, so took some of the cousins' beds without demur and half asleep.

How kind of Cousin Jonas to propose tucking them away at once! They had caught up some indispensable toilet articles in their rush from the mob.

Next morning the family went to take leave of the home. The boxes of silverware and foreign china bric-a-brac the Liscombs had buried in the little old caved in wine cellar must have been ruined by the fire, so they thought it unnecessary to even investigate. Besides, a chimney had toppled into it, and the brick and stones were yet hot, with no tools to remove them, nor no workman in the vicinity, nor any safer place to store them, in case they were found intact.

There would be no possible sale of the planta-

tion while the war lasted, hence they left it. The fine oaks had been chopped into to kill them; the shrubbery ruined by the horses and mules belonging to the mob. It was curious indeed to see a hen and chickens. The hen was lustily scratching, with encouraging promises to her little ones. Where or how she had escaped the havoc was truly a wonder. It may have been that she had been setting under the floor of an old corn crib some distance away in a field and had just hatched her brood since quiet had come to the place, by the utter desolation fallen upon it. Even she felt the loneliness.

She was quickly taken by Mammy Nance over to Cousin Jonas' plantation, to start anew the poultry breeding over there, for not even so much had been left him. She and her little princelings were royally received, and royally attended.

When the house of cousins and the Liscomb family were at dinner, a messenger arrived requesting Cousin Jonas to come over to a neighbor's, full five miles away, to perform the burial service over the remains of one of Captain Ned's soldiers, 'as no clergyman remained in the county. All had marched with troops towards Chickamauga some days before.

There had been a skirmish, several had been killed, and Captain Ned had been seriously wounded; perhaps lay dead at the moment this news was received. Major Liscomb set out at once to try to pass the lines, and get him into the home hospital, if possible.

It was difficult work; the many useless delays



in sending the old man from post to post, was simply maddening. But he won out by a strange power of resolution against sore and overtaxed nerves. Ned barely lived when he found him, and for days hovered on the borders of the grave. He was indeed seriously wounded. The hospital was over full, the nurses worn out, and visits from the most skilled of their surgeons rare. These were coerced into overwork, far beyond their ability, for the moving troops of both factions.

Mammy Nance worked hard at the hospital, while the old cook, Eliza, put her time in at Cousin Jonas', and at the hospital three miles distant.

"Right much of a walk to tote soup, ah reck-ons," she observed one day when she was starting to the hospital with a large bucket of soup, made of manna, so far as could be made out by any single person of the household, for each one had found an herb, a rabbit, a bird or squirrel to add.

Sheep sorrel was the flavoring element, and stray grains from the bare fields used.

After a month's effort of indescribable work and hardship and anxiety, Major Liscomb got passes for his family North. He meant to get Ned into a sanitarium in New York, and if possible, prevail on him to go abroad, if he should ever be able to be carried out of his own land. He doubted it, however, when he looked upon his wretched and emaciated body. The fatigue and experiences of the journey North almost finished him when he took it. When he was car-

ried to the hospital he was almost beyond help. Youth alone seemed to hold soul and body together, and keep a slight throb in the tired heart. Often he looked so like one dead that his family believed he was indeed gone. All care for life had ceased. Delirium seemed exhausted, and no sign of thought, or dream, appeared to live any more in him.

Mother, father, sister, nurse were all the same; he did not open his eyes to see who served him now. He swallowed only because the fluids given him compelled the muscles to act.

Frantic, the father appealed to the hospital authorities to bring some one, something, to save him. The latest new remedy was given; the heart seemed to respond fitfully. Then more strongly, and Captain Ned, once the favorite of his county, the most gallant of the very gallant South, began again to live! But oh, so uncertain! for the rally might be the beginning of the end only, but the flash of a startled spark, not the permanent current of a human life that had almost flowed out.

Ah, that reviving life! It took a long, long time to secure its foothold again. How could the beauty and strength of the young man ever return! It was long before he could even think or care for anything. When at last he was able to think, that was worse still, for everything was wrong. He could not understand the things that were done for his welfare, and wished they would just let him alone. It seemed to him life was not worth so much trouble as they were be-

stowing on it. How stupid and silly it all was! and he sank away into another collapse.

One day he started out of one of these stupors, like one who has had a vivid dream, and is shocked by it. He looked around, seemed disappointed, restless and excited. He was questioned.

"I heard some one speak I used to know, I'm sure." Too weak now to pursue the subject further, he slept again. When he woke, he marvelled that no nurse was in the room, but he had a sensation as if his heart were beating unusually loud, but as he listened more attentively, he found that his head was pillowed on an arm close to the heart of another, and it was this other one he heard.

Raising his eyes, they met the tender, beautiful dark eyes of her he loved before all else on earth—Alice Wood.

Alice Wood, his betrothed, had come on to New York alone. How she ever got through, was a miracle in the eyes of Major Liscomb's family.

The way she accomplished it was by wearing the garb of an army nurse. She had procured it once to go with some young friends to do real nurse work after a battle; then wore it one time to see Ned.

It now answered her purpose as disguise and protection, for, of course, she was a nurse going North to recuperate, and the profession was always respected. She had been near Ned often; the dress serving even here to procure admission

to the hospital; and she was really learning much of a nurse's duties.

The invalid certainly made rapid progress now, though some days came again, and again when they despaired of his recovery. After two months he was carried from the hospital to a delightful place upon the Hudson River opposite the Palisades.

The family and his fiancée were always near him, and often read him the war news when he was able to hear it. He learned thereby of battles in which his company had taken part, and generally came out with a loss. Finally, it had been disbanded, as the time of their enlistment had expired.

All were glad, so Ned could not take up his command again as captain, as he intended to do, so soon as he was able.

It was difficult, but they brought him to see that the cause he had fought, and almost died for, was assuredly a lost cause, and it was madness to sacrifice further to a failure.

The freedom of the slaves was sure to take place. The proclamation to go into effect the first of the next January meant that; for few of those bearing arms would lay them down voluntarily. They could die fighting far more easily.

What could the South do without the negro to work his hot tobacco and cotton fields? To hire them seemed preposterous, for their pay would be high, of course, and reduce the fine profits.

Gradually, he was influenced to give up the South to her fate, since they could not restore

her to her original condition, and go away with his family to live in a foreign land.

Now with an invalid's indolence, he lay and watched the steamers ply the grand, wide and majestic Hudson. He indistinctly and lazily enjoyed the presence of "Sis and Alice," as he always called the young ladies. The Palisades sometimes got a bit monotonous, but a nap would make welcome again the sight of them, if Sis and Alice were only near by, and did not talk too much!

Finally he was taken down to the water, and permitted to try his traveling strength in a steamboat excursion upon the river. He stood the trip very well, and appeared benefitted by it.



## V.

## ON THE ATLANTIC.

All aboard! All aboard! and the plank had been taken up. No more connection with the shore now! The Liscomb family and Alice Wood were bound for Europe. Others were on the same vessel, very much for the same reason that they were. It was impossible for them to live any longer in America while the war lasted; for they would not live North.

The South was ruined. The negro would rule, or help to rule. The hated North would overrun their beloved land; was down there devastating it. Alas! "Farewell! farewell! farewell!"

Many a heart was sobbing while chains rattled, ropes thumped the decks, timbers creaked and the monster steamer slowly got itself into motion. Then, almost turned around, as if to take a last look at the receding shore. The crowd cheered lustily and waved handkerchiefs from the shore.

The most of the passengers responded. A few wept violently, especially the Southerners, who already felt the pangs of exile and utter homelessness. Ned, who pale as if dead, suppressed his emotion as he saw his speechless, undemon-

strative parents trying to hide their feelings from him, stiff and afraid to look towards him.

Unable to control himself further, Major Liscomb, grim, erect, started towards his stateroom. His wife followed him, crushed and quite overcome with grief. Once alone, the elderly pair gave themselves up to violent, hysterical weeping for a long time. They felt very, very helpless.

Ned asked Rene and Alice to have him wheeled into his room, but changed the order when the girls themselves took charge of his chair, saying, "To the salon, please."

They brought cards, as if to have a game, moved their chairs close to him. Each handled a part of the cards, shuffling and shifting them from hand to hand. No one could play yet. The humiliating feeling of banishment; the sorrowful look on the countenances of the old people, as they bravely mastered their evident emotions was too vivid yet!

Ned covered his face with his handkerchief; then the girls wiped the fast flowing tears from their swelling eyes, very quietly, however, lest he know it. Later on it grew very quiet on ship-board. The most of the vast number of passengers were in their staterooms getting used to the narrow quarters, unpacking a few necessary things. A few were making a dinner toilet. Others occupied steamer chairs on deck, some already in a recumbent position, a little distressed and conscience stricken, at remembrances of always having eaten too much! Ned said "That's a symptom."

A small number promenaded the deck, with a look of inquiry on their countenances. They were really taking an invoice, mentally, of the already seasick. More people, however, appeared at this first dinner, just at nightfall, than was seen at any other during the voyage. It was already evening when they moved out of the New York harbor and dinner came soon after.

Alice Wood did not make her appearance at dinner. As she related it afterwards is the best way to tell why she did not partake of that first dinner. She said:

"At first, I felt as if I should smother if I did not stay out on deck. My collar and belt got too snug. Then my head seemed curiously to increase in size, until it reached wonderful proportions! I grew feverish and very sleepy. If I slept, it was a sort of half-conscious swooning. I was soon worn out with the violent exercise nausea forced upon me, and fantastic dreams of all the rich and remarkable dishes I had ever tasted haunted me, and haunted me, till I vowed I'd never taste food again."

"Oh, oh, Alice! please stop!" begged Rene. But the vivid description amused Ned very much.

All the rest of the party escaped the harrowing experience, and were beginning to take pleasure in the sea voyage; the gulls that still pursued the ship, and the variety of people making up the list of passengers occupied their attention.

Evening brought out some music from the musically inclined. Ned said "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep" put him to sleep early. The

salons were early deserted by most of the passengers. Only a few young and very poetic lingered up, till hints from scrub people appearing with brushes and buckets scattered them rather unpoetically.

Peace and resignation already began to hover over the Liscomb party.

Meeting on deck next morning to take their airing, the Liscomb party began relating their first night's experience to each other. Mrs. Liscomb was the first to tell what had befallen them.

"Your father and I were startled at about ten o'clock last night by a woman dashing into our room and closing the portière closely shut.

Naturally, we took her for some demented creature. She listened behind the curtains till she seemed satisfied that some one in search of her had passed by the room. Then stepping nearer us, said to me, "Please pardon this intrusion, but my husband threatened to shoot me, and as he turned to get his revolver out of his valise, I ran away and darted in here, till his anger has cooled. Will you both accompany me to our stateroom?"

Having run away ourselves from too much gunning and tragedies, we did not feel like rushing into other people's scrapes so soon, but we went out with her, glad to get her away.

Just around the corner in the corridor, on the way to their room, the husband appeared, and in a gentlemanlike and even affectionate voice, said to the woman,

"Why, Angelina, dear, I was wondering what

had become of you." She answered equally calm, without a blush on her face,

"I got frightened and ran to these people for protection, while you were out."

Your father looked the man in the face, quite as cool as he was, and replied :

"We have promised her our protection against anything that may come up, let me assure you, suh," and put his hand on his hip pocket. It was very laughable to see these three so politely and so deceitfully fixing up the matter and bowing good night."

They all enjoyed the tale, and the way she told it. Miss Rene had a somewhat similar story to tell. She then commenced it.

"I was entering mine and Alice's stateroom, about nine o'clock, when I heard a voice in devout prayer. She seemed to appeal to the Virgin Mary.

I looked directly across the narrow corridor, and saw a fine looking woman kneeling beside her berth, engaged in her devotions, without having drawn shut her portière, or shut her door.

"Oh, bring him to repentance, I implore!" were the words that I heard. I closed my curtains.

An hour later her husband, I suppose, rapped and rapped on her now closed door. No answer came. He rattled the knob, and called, "Agnes, Agnes, dear!" No answer. Next thing I heard, he came with a steward who had a key to the door, I suppose, for he opened it. I could tell that different ones came to the room, and that



something had gone amiss, though all was managed very quietly. The surgeon told us this morning that she had taken morphine, but finding it out so soon, they had saved her life.

"They have all brought their misfortunes and bad tempers with them, it seems," said Ned. "Why the dickens couldn't they leave them at home, I wonder!"

"Ah, yes, why couldn't they?" replied Rene. She was thinking of an hour of sad reminiscent reflection that had monopolized her powers this morning, before many aboard the ship were stirring, awakened as she had been by the coal tumbling through the funnels into the furnace.

The days of the crossing sped all too quickly. The novelty of new faces, of different nationalities; the dances, the concerts, the promenades on deck, even jumping the rope was indulged in; the lazy occupation of simply nothing to do but to watch the boundless waves chasing each other forever and forever, rolling over and over each other, going nowhere, and watching the far-away horizon.

It all suited the worn-out invalid soldier, though he could take little part in the amusements. He had Alice with him, he had not been obliged to leave her in his unfortunate America! He dared not think of those grand young men of his country, all his acquaintances, in fact, who had fallen in the lost cause!

One day was very much like another on ship-board. One morning a speck far away forward on the horizon increased in size, little by little, until it turned out the dimensions of an approach-

ing ship. There was a lively scampering of passengers, rushing away to write a word home, for the ships would exchange mail and news as they passed each other. Approaching, the passengers waved at one another from deck to deck.

Some of the messages sent home by them were incoherent lines, dictated hastily, by brains drunken with seasickness. Others were cool, calm information that their writers were well and happy, and were really upon the bosom of the Atlantic Ocean.

Rene wrote, at the mother's request, a few hasty words to the home of cousins at Mr. Jonas Wilson's plantation, expressing remembrance of their great kindness to them in the hours of their deepest sorrow and loneliness, and of their self-denial, the greatest appreciation. Even Ned wrote a few words to his commander at Chickamauga.

The London papers were eagerly scanned by the Americans, hoping for some late news about the war at home. Very little important telegraphic news was found. None later indeed than the last they received just before sailing from New York a few days before. There was a lull, just before the last storm.

One day they were warned that a vessel had just encountered icebergs, so they sailed out of their course, quite into a hotter atmosphere, to the great discomfort of everybody. Some of the crew and firemen being rather new sailors, soon fell, overcome by the torrid heat.

After a long promenade of the deck one afternoon, Alice Wood and Captain Ned were sit-

ting on the shady side of the vessel, idly observing and commenting on those that passed them. They had many times noticed in the last day or so, two men with closely locked arms, walking the deck very rapidly.

At first they thought that the men were simply taking needed exercise, but this afternoon they halted near by, looking very attentively at a game of some sort going on. Then Ned observed that one of the men was a lunatic, and the other his keeper.

After the men had taken up their vigorous tramp again, they heard comments about the droll actions of the peculiar one. Somebody volunteered the information that the afflicted one was really "quite off his base"; that he was private tutor to certain young princes of a royal house in Europe, who, suffering from nervous prostration, had been sent for an ocean voyage to America, but growing worse, his malady increasing to the point of insanity, he had been returned to his own country, with a keeper in charge of him. This was a strong, resolute man who had a desperate struggle only a day or so before to keep the lunatic from climbing over the railing into the ocean. The man was not in the least vicious. So now he kept close hold of him and promenaded rapidly to give him no chance to do any violent thing, talking all the time. He had a guard always following, to aid in case there should occur need of it, in mastering the poor lunatic.

Alice shivered a little in fear, as she heard that there was a possibility of an outbreak, and

kept far from the couple whenever she saw them on deck, or in the dining salon.

"Oh, we saw also other lunatics nestled about in corners, making love to each other!" said Ned. "They did not have keepers, though some of them ought to have had, I think, for we happened upon them in the midst of a hot quarrel, to judge of the flushed faces and flashing eyes of several of them."

The party laughed and asked Ned, if any of these lunatics belonged to the Liscomb party. Ned responded,

"Not so far as I know, were any of our party so engaged. They are too sensible."

"Well, your mother and I just encountered some of those loud talking and laughing Americans one so often hears about, and really, I was ashamed, and understand better now the criticism of Europeans. Even the foreign sailors and crew laughed among themselves. I wanted very much to give them a hint of their crude manners, and was sorry for their bringing up, I assure you," related Major Liscomb.

"Let us all dine together to-night. It is our last dinner aboard," and the elderly couple led the way to the dining salon. A band was playing lively airs, and all things seemed to be letting loose from the ordinary tension as they approached land.

They lingered long on deck that night, watching the whipping of the phosphorescent waters oft, and the pale autumn moon at its full overhead, and the grouping of lovers on the decks.

After midnight the steamer seemed to skim

the waters of the ocean. Her machinery had hardly time to make the regular revolutions, one could believe, for they were so rapid they could not be counted. Another vessel was racing this one to Liverpool and beat her into port five minutes, so they afterwards learned.

It was a hair-raising experience! To the sleepless inclined ones it was a terrible experience. To the imaginative, they would surely go to smash and never arrive at all! They seemed to be flying.

The ship arrived hot and panting, but safe, and our party remained on board the hour or so yet before dawn, getting together their effects, glad to leave the ship and go ashore, through the Customs Office.



## VI.

## A WEDDING AT WESTMINSTER.

The Liscomb party hastened to get and to read the discouraging War News from America. This put Ned again into a restless mood. As he gained his health, he grew eager to return and help his side out. It was yet impossible, as he well knew.

"The Confederate Army was going to pieces. Richmond was surrounded by the Northern Army. The beleaguered city must surrender. The end was at hand." The tourists silently wept together for a long time. A cable contradicted it, but there was still bad enough news.

They did their sight-seeing leisurely. One morning they drove out to see the statues of Prince Albert and Queen Victoria, and the Colossal Lions, in their first days at Liverpool.

In a few days they were ready for a tour of Scotland. At Glasgow they saw the University, the Necropolis and the Cathedral. These two were joined together by the "Bridge of Sighs." Kelvin Grove and the Botanical Gardens were visited and the famous lakes. Then a trip through the Trossachs was delightful, recalling Bruce, Wallace, Rob Roy and the McGregors and the Lady of the Lake.

Stirling Castle and the battlefields of Bannockburn were in sight. A few delightful days were passed in the Trossachs Hotel, to rest Captain Ned. Here was no dullness, for a stream of tourists was passing all the time, and these were a fine study themselves, being of all nations and all kinds from the panorama of life, with their dissimilar temperaments and individual styles of dress. After a few days' rest they traveled on to Edinburgh.

Visiting Edinburgh Castle. They went into the famous corner room from whose window the luckless Mary Stuart caused her infant, James, before he was eight days old, to be lowered by a cord and carried across the city, to be baptized a Roman Catholic.

Then an oblong, hollowed out stone, high up in the wall at the entrance of her apartments, was pointed out by the guide as having been found by some workmen to contain the skeleton of an infant. A doublet, perhaps a page's, with a number nine, was upon it. Nothing else was known about it.

They were driven over to Holywood Castle and Abbey, or the little that was left of them, and saw the unreadable chiseling upon the worn-out marbles. The Church of St. Giles, the house of John Knox and the monument of Sir Walter Scott were visited. The University and many places were given due attention. After some days here, the Liscombs took up their travels again.

One day was spent at Melrose. At Melrose Abbey they had pointed out the place of sepul-

ture of the heart of Bruce, probably not at all true.

They did not linger near its old historic graves long. They were glad to leave the structure; that is, its walls, with its hideous old gargoyles.

They stopped at Abbotsford, the home of Sir Walter Scott, with its orderly library and belongings of the great author. The place was situated in a basin, with the River Tweed flowing back of it. The caretaker was punctilliousness and dignity personified and pronounced "Sir Walter" with great grandeur.

Ned was improving rapidly. He admitted, however, with much reluctance to-day, that he was much fatigued when they returned from this sight-seeing tour. A couple of days rest, and they continued their travels; this time to Stratford-on-Avon.

Here they were particularly interested at the old home in Henley Street, in the crude pen-knife-name cut on his old school desk many times and in the broad chimney, and the well-kept gardens of the bard. More so than in the new house or even with the tomb itself, were they interested, it seemed, and felt more his personality.

Not far from this old house of Shakespeare's parents, who were wool dealers in his childhood, was the deer park, from which, it was said, he did the poaching that caused his flight to London and his anonymous life there. Probably a fateful foundation of his future greatness; who knows?

"Yes," said Ned, "poaching in that day was

punished by death, and to escape hanging, flight and concealment in the large city was his most convenient recourse. Shrewd man, as well as intellectual, and he was driven by Fate!"

"Only gossip, just gossip, you know, Ned. Don't repeat that again."

"Gossip or fact, I don't know, but it is a poor wind that blows nobody some good," said Major Liscomb. "You see it was one of those fateful winds that gave us this enjoyable tour of Europe, my children."

A few more days in this Athens of the North where the day seems never to end, for the nights are so very light, and the morning seems always at hand to the drowsy one who has slept but an hour or so; they stopped over at Kenilworth, to visit the best preserved ruins of that region.

Lounging upon the beautiful grass of its forest, Ned and Alice Wood awaited the rest of the party, who remained in the ruins to see the Oubliettes. Ned felt unusually well to-day and hopeful. He begged his fiancée to set a day for their wedding.

"Why cannot it take place in Westminster Abbey?" said Alice Wood.

Ned replied quickly. "A fine idea! That is just the place; good—good!"

"We can call up the ghosts of all that glorious assembly, princes, poets and all the noble company to witness the affair. I am very happy, Ned," and indeed the girl looked it.

He drew her towards him, unmindful of who might see him and gave anew the sacred betrothal kiss. They sat there in silence, too full of

emotion to talk; too happy to utter a word; her dark eyes and hair against his blond and pale face.

Rene and her parents came to them in their wonted leisurely manner.

"Yes, we saw the oubliette. It was a secret dungeon of other days. One entering it came forth no more, sure enough. They told us that there were sword blades in the walls of this great round well-like structure, now filled up; and a prisoner thrown down there was never seen again. He was cut to pieces against he reached the bottom." It was the Major who described it.

The party returned to the hotel. Next day they started to London. Arriving, they told the rest of their party of the arrangement to be married in Westminster Abbey, and make the honeymoon tour through grave old Holland.

The shopping and sight-seeing were all to be accomplished first. The ladies of the party went to a dressmaker, whose address had been furnished them by an acquaintance they had met at Liverpool, and gave orders for dresses. All were fitted out with new travelling dresses; even the bridal gown was a chic tailor-made dress for travel; all to be made very soon.

Major and Ned went to see a tailor whom they had heard mentioned by Americans they had met. The gossipy man who measured them said:

"W'ich 'otel, sir? Yes, certainly. We like to work for the Hamericans. We 'ave a large custom among them."

They were settled in a hotel near the station they had come by into London, and were served



for their evening dinner just what they had expected from descriptions furnished by travelers they had met in Scotland: "mutton and gooseberry tart," and mutton that they grew to like, too, for the chef seemed to understand how to cook it.

They had not eaten mutton in their home cuisine, but learned to like it in Europe, so they all declared. The Cockney English they soon learned to understand, though at first they did not grasp its significance, as drivers would say 'otel and Harridge for Harwich and hotel. Some of them called their carriages "the machines."

Though three years had elapsed since the happy eve of Rene's appointed wedding that summer at the dear old plantation house, there yet came over her hours of inexpressible grief and depression, when the miserable ending of the affair took sole possession of her thoughts. Ah, miserable, wretched hours!

She tried hard to make no sign of her suffering, but her friends knew and generously refrained from mentioning anything connected with that time.

Somehow, since coming to London, she had been thinking much about her recreant lover. Often in the past three years she had succeeded in hating him, but just as often the old love had returned to her longing soul, and taken full possession again of her life.

He had talked to her of London. The honeymoon was to have been spent here. Ah, that was why she was so occupied now with the old re-

grets! Yes, yes, he had talked so much of London.

How different this visit now from the one that was to have been! "Here are Alice Wood and Ned flaunting their happiness in my face, and their wedding, too, pending!"

A slight touch of madness, in truth, made these hours of her heart's despair, and she could have turned against her best friends while it lasted, but reason, which had always been a strong element in her character, still held her back. Then repentent, she would murmur tenderly and kindly:

"But poor, dear, good brother Ned! How sweet that he can be happy! Poor, sick boy! how mean of me to envy you and Alice your joy of the coming wedding; but it brings to mind *our* nuptials, and so vividly the disappointment. Yes, yes, that was it. Ned nor Alice is to blame for being happy."

She remembered that night on the veranda at home, when the mocking bird sang so sweetly, and the whippoorwill vigorously uttered his notes, while she was herself so enraptured and certain of his love—sure of his honor.

Earnestly and honestly she battled with these dark hours of despair. How glad she would have been to know that he, Captain Budd Stone, was a scamp, and only treated her as he had out of inherent meanness.

"No, no, I've made no mistake. I read in his glorious dark eyes his soulful love. I heard in his wonderful voice the depths of his passion for me; the earnest imploring of a true nature.

It rings in my ears forever." Sobbing, she continued thinking more and more kindly of him.

"Some unexplainable thing happened to him after he left me on the veranda that night. Some day—somewhere, I shall know what it was."

Utterly exhausted by her mental excitement, she was unable to go down to dinner with the family, and went to bed to keep from it. The half distracted mind kept right on in its wretched reflections after the others had gone down, taking on another of its moods, however.

"But why did he not send an explanation. He only wrote: 'The wedding cannot occur to-day, nor at any time.' Lucid!" she said mockingly.

Like the others, he thought, all being over, there was no use of a bridging apology to bungle the matter still further. Well, perhaps there wasn't. Then, impatient with this endless and aimless thinking, she cried out impatiently:

"Oh, let it go! Let it go!" and dropped off into mental unconsciousness from sheer exhaustion; not exactly asleep, yet mercifully somewhat akin to it was her condition. It soon seemed to her that she slept and dreamed, for she heard the greatest, the tenderest tenor voice, far, far away, singing their old song; the one he sang that last night they had seen each other, the eve of their nuptials.

Drowsiness possessed her, and she believed yet that she was dreaming for some minutes, and tried to ignore the song and keep clear of the misery of thinking awhile. Then, suddenly awaking, she sprang up, saying, excitedly and nervously:

"O, but it is a real voice; a real song!"

Every nerve was alert. She listened. It was a voice in the room below her own. She sprang towards the chimney and snatched the tin cap from the hole in the flue and listened intently, murmuring quite aloud this time:

"It is he, it is he!" The song ended and she heard it no more.

"How strange! I am certainly at myself? It was Captain Budd Stone's voice, greatly improved, more robust, richer, entrancing! I must find out."

She rang and a lad answered the call. She asked him:

"Who has the chamber immediately under mine?"

"It is one of them op'ry chaps, I suppose, mum; he was goin' over 'is piece, I reckon. 'E's gone to the op'ry 'ouse now. 'E'll not 'sturb you any more."

She handed him a coin, and asked him to bring her a programme of the opera. It seemed that he would never return and she was about to ring again when he appeared with the programme.

Hastily she scanned the names and found that of the "grand tenor" was Sig. Paulus Mascori. In disgust she said, more composed than before:

"Well, I suppose all tenors of the same timber resemble each other, as Ned would say; and sure enough this showed more culture and was more robust than the one I had in mind——" she reflected, a little ashamed of what may have been a trick of her fancy; but she could not quite

abandon the belief that she had heard the voice of her former loved one.

When she called at the Office of Inquiry in the hotel, she found that the company was from New York. Their engagement had expired, and they had gone to sing elsewhere.

Whether it was Captain Budd Stone or not, was not quite clear. The more she thought about it, the more it came out clearer in her mind that it was indeed he. This was one of her strong days, and she argued:

"He left me voluntarily—I shall voluntarily leave him alone—yet am I rather certain that Paulus Mascori and Mr. Stone are one person."

She wrought herself into an angry fit of jealousy as she thought how women became infatuated with all great tenors. How they must adore him—handsome in person as he was! Ah, no wonder she adored him; was entranced with his heaven given voice, when she was young. She felt old—very old now, with such long, sad years of sorrow!

Their lives would be henceforth more certainly apart. He, the great tenor—she, a forgotten sweetheart! She would try to harden herself to any accidental meeting that now might occur in their travels, but oh! she should adore the great tenor forever!"

To her family she did not mention the grand tenor, Sig. Paulus Mascori, nor did she intimate that that dinner hour had brought her keenly stirring experiences, instead of the rest she was supposed to be enjoying.

A waiter followed them when dinner was fin-



ished with a tray of delicate food for Rene, which she tried to eat. When they left her for a few minutes, she sprang to the chimney and threw a part of it into the hole and put the cap over it. When the others returned, she was demurely fumbling the food and thanked them as meekly as possible for the kindness of the good dinner, thinking, "What a rascal I am getting to be!"

All the necessary arrangements were completed for the marriage of Ned and Alice. So they and Annie Miller, who had just joined them, repaired to Westminster Abbey for the ceremony. Annie Miller had come over to Europe to study art, with others of her acquaintance, and had "switched off" to London to visit with the Liscombs for a week, so it happened that she arrived just in time to be a witness of the wedding. It brought to her's and to Rene's minds another one that was to have been one time in the Southland; the dear South.

The marriage consummated, the bridal couple went on to Holland. The others of the party remained in London with Annie Miller, to await her friends to join her.

## VII.

## A HALF DAY OF MENDING AND TALKING.

So soon as the bridal couple was indeed gone and the luncheon partaken, the Major was settled for his afternoon smoke and nap, which generally followed it. The ladies then abandoned themselves to an hour of undress, lounging in Rene's room.

There was scarcely a wink of sleep—really sound sleep, for the two younger of the three women, but as the elder one dropped into a restful snooze at once, the others refrained from conversation till she should wake up.

Finally an emphatic inhalation announced the end of a very satisfactory siesta and the ban of restraint was suddenly removed.

"You are laughing, girls, and I am sure it is because I snored. I slept hard, for I was tired. Now, own up. Didn't I snore?" asked Mrs. Liscomb, a bit shame-faced.

The girls laughed still more heartily, and Annie Miller said "I don't know. I think we laughed as much at our own inability to sleep. I looked over at Rene to see if she slept and found her looking at me with the same inquiry on her face. I wanted to say something, and was sure she was of the same intention, but a sneaky, quiet

little "puff" from her mother warned us not to break into such comfort." All laughed together now.

Rene read aloud from a newspaper Major Liscomb had just sent to the room. He had marked the column of Telegraphic News, and Rene read:

"The soldiers of the Confederacy are abandoning their ranks by squads. The negroes are running away from the plantations by scores. The slaveholders are bringing them into the cities and hiring them there. Pens in many places hold numbers of them, and they are locked in at night. By the first day of January, when the proclamation of freedom is to go into effect there will be few negroes in slavery to free."

They all looked grim and sneered. Rene threw the paper away from her.

"Oh, I am so chilly. It seems to me I'm cold to the marrow!" said Mrs. Liscomb one morning, and she hugged the woollen scarf still closer about her.

"Why, I lighted two kerosene lamps; put one on one side of my toilet stand, and one on the other on the floor and then I could not bear to make my toilet as I ought to have done, I was so cold," responded her daughter, who had just joined her parents to go to breakfast. Major Liscomb ventured:

"We are on the eve of a London fog, I should say. Let us get away before it is quite upon us. I should like to be settled in Italy before Christmas, particularly for Ned's sake."

In came Annie Miller, hugging a Chinese shawl snug about her head and neck, and rushed

up to the open fire, her hands blue with cold. Laughing, Rene told her that,

"Father has been predicting a London fog for us all to enjoy. What do you say to that?"

"I think it is already upon us if darkness and chilliness are any sign. I must rush my sight-seeing to-day, or I shall not be able to see anything at all before I must join my party."

"Have you no fire in your room, girls?" asked Major Liscomb anxiously.

"Fire? Fire, yes, but it don't make a hole in the dense cold. We had a coal fire."

"We have not half seen London ourselves, Annie, but we hope to live here awhile later on, and can then familiarize ourselves with its notable places. To-day we will 'do' the Tower, the Bank of England, British, and the Kensington Museums, and Albert Memorial. Of course you will be again in London, as you will be abroad a year or so," said Mrs. Liscomb.

"O, certainly, and I thank you, for I am sure you have planned a full enough day for us. I am glad to have such guides and such unexpected companions in this sight-seeing," replied Annie Miller. Rene said, reflecting:

"I wish we could be here in the opera season, but to hear grand opera, one has to be booked some time before for the evening selected, I've heard."

"Yes, I've heard that also. The season is short and so crowded, so in vogue when it is on, that one has to look out for tickets beforehand, but I shall be in Leipsic, and you know the Germans are so musical, I shall not want for music.

It will be a bit less trouble to get music there," said Annie Miller.

They were all very tired that evening, "And soon after their mutton and tart," as Rene said, they mounted their high beds and slumbered.

The young ladies went to St. Paul's Cathedral on Sunday morning. Rene had been there before. Altogether new to her, Annie Miller was much impressed by the intonation of the service as particularly emphasized at St. Paul's. She was awed by the grand and beautiful structure, its fine sculptures and its vast, columned interior.

Major and Mrs. Liscomb went to the solid, plain, old church of Dr. Spurgeon. They recalled a time at a country church when a young clergyman had delivered one of the renowned preacher's sermons as his own. Few of his audience knew, but having a book of the sermons, the Liscombs knew, and had read them. They had to dine the young man that day, and considerately hid the book before inviting him into the parlor. Curiously enough, the Major was thinking of this episode as he seated himself in the old London church, and felt eager to hear him speak, grateful to chance for being there.

Soon the devout, elderly, thick-set man appeared, and his still, rich, low voice and thoroughly English personality thrilled them with reverence. Some such awesome feelings moved another in a pew near the Major's seat. This other one was unable to master his emotions and from time to time he uttered aloud such phrases as



"Yes, Lord! What a privilege! I thank Thee that I can see and hear him!"

He was evidently a cranky, over sentimental, over pious, effusive man from the interior of the Middle States of America.

The hours of Annie Miller's visit to Irene Liscomb were drawing to a close, and the girls had indulged in no confidential talks, as young people usually do, especially old neighbors in the South, as these had been only a short time before. Indeed, Annie Miller was to have taken a prominent part in the wedding which was to have been, and was not, at the plantation. It had never been mentioned between them.

Fine days were growing rare in the murky air of the great city. This was one particularly chilly and dark, and they did not mind a half day off, as they announced at breakfast. They soon decided to pass that morning in mending gloves and stockings, and in straightening trunks and drawers, or, as Rene appended, "the contents thereof."

They soon set themselves at the task. The elderly pair took a "two wheeler" that the maid had just whistled for, to go across the city to call upon some English people whom they had met one time at a watering place in New York State.

After directions given in the bureau of information, in the hotel, and a search among their papers for the cards and letters from those people, they started off to find them.

Emerging finally from a hopelessly intricate jumble of wagons, carts, drays, omnibuses and

carriages, they came to the more aristocratic part of London, where dwelt their former friends.

Cards had already been sent, and receiving no attention, the Americans had concluded to see, at least, where Sir and Lady So and So lived, and how.

They found the pretty old town house of their acquaintances; but the caretaker told them Sir Joseph Markham had died last year, and Lady Markham had decided to remain out of town through the winter, perhaps longer.

In the business streets, near a prominent dry goods house, they dismissed their two wheeler, and went to finish some forgotten shopping.

That finished, they loitered in different departments to see the new goods received and shelved for the Winter's trade. Feeling themselves not particularly welcome, after having purchased all they intended, they did not remain very long in the establishment; called a cab and returned to the hotel.

Alice and Rene had overhauled their effects, and thrown into piles on the bed all the things needing a button or a stitch.

Now they were mending and talking, the talking going on at a more progressive rate than the needle work.

"Well, Rene, I wanted to tell you something ever since I came, but I felt afraid," said Annie Miller.

"Afraid of what, pray?"

"Well, I felt a hesitancy, knowing you to be such an ardent Southern Rights girl," responded Annie Miller.

"What has that to do with it, I want to know?" and Rene fired up a little.

"O, it concerns a Yankee Lieutenant—that's all."

"That will make no difference now. I am not quite so intense as I was in those days, Alice. I feel and know that the South are responsible for this war equally with the North. I still feel sure that the South had a right to secede, but the act of secession was not feasible. Better had it been to suffer the loss of the slaves than to have lost everything and everybody, as we have, in this fool's war. And what have we gained? Nothing but a whole hundred years of suffering and poverty. Our men cannot in that time attain to the high position they occupied in the land. No, they cannot!"

"Bully for you! as my little mother would say if she had heard your fine speech. Really, Rene, that is the way I see it, too, but the young people of the South hate the North. They had been taught to savagely hate them during the war."

"Yes, I know it, and Ned would, too, only father keeps him in check."

"I have noticed that his ardor for a Confederate Government has become modified. I believe the death of all his young men friends and his own narrow escape has been the agent in this change," ventured Annie.

"No, no, he sees the failure of the cause. He knows it is a lost cause, and the great loss, the great ruin of his land, since they can't succeed, that is the element only of his change. Truly, it is! He believes we had a right to secede; that

he does, but, like me, he says it was not feasible. Pity they did not all think it earlier."

"Well, I was going to tell you, I have worked myself into some disrepute by having a Yankee beau, or sweetheart."

"I am astonished, Annie! How has it ever happened? I used to think you the most ardent Southern Rights girl. You were simply savage towards the Yanks that time they foraged all your calves and chickens, you know."

"Yes, wasn't I? I remember telling you not to pronounce their thieving '*foraging*.' I said, 'Dang them, they are thieves out and out.' Don't you remember?"

"Yes, but hush, hush. Don't repeat it. Don't ever say that again!"

"Well, I said it. I know I said just exactly those words, and I wanted to shoot them, but mother kept the revolver away from me," declared Annie Miller, laughing.

"I must tell you about my Yankee boy," said Annie, blushing.

"For his sake you have changed opinion, is it?"

"No, Rene, no, I have not; but I see the great mistake we've made in having the war at all. Why, Rene, can't you see that? Anybody can see that."

"I see it, but after arranging for the new government, leaving the old one, without the consent of Congress, the Southern pride made them willing to die rather than back down, so they had to fight it out. Tell me about the Yank."

"Yes, it was stiff-necked pride, not good sense.

Well, let them fight it out. The end is near at hand, they know it."

"Oh, yes, we'll not fight about it. Girls don't know about those things. Yes, after you all left the South, the foraging, the burning and horrors continued. Father went to headquarters and asked that a guard be furnished him till these marauders should be gone away, so a guard under a handsome lieutenant was sent to our plantation. Father took the oath of allegiance to the Government."

"I suppose that is why we escaped what you and the Stones suffered. They ate up everything we had but the house," said Annie, shrugging her shoulders and laughing, "but the Commanding Lieutenant was a nice—a very nice fellow."

"Hem! Hem!" said Rene, a bit sarcastic. "Nice thieving Yankee boy!"

"You needn't 'hem, hem' about it. He is an educated, principled boy, and as jolly as you please. Mother and father both liked him."

"I supposed your gratitude changed your opinions about the Yankee into idealistic exhaltation."

"It may be! Anyhow, I loved him right much from the beginning of our acquaintance. We shall be married so soon as the war be ended, and we all know the end is in sight. Our money and our men are exhausted. That is why our soldiers are deserting by hundreds. Some thirteen of these deserters were retaken by a Southern company and promptly hanged to the oaks in the young grove up there at The Forks the other day. Pity for the poor, starving fellows, wasn't it? They did do it."



"Annie, promise me you will not set too much store by this engagement. You know how such things often turn out?" said Rene sadly.

"Yes, yes, I know. I am wedded to my love of art, and shall try to keep my other love second to that, but he adores me, and oh, I do adore him, I assure you!"

"Say, when you write me to Leipsic, address 'Annie Müller.' That's the right name of the family, and aunt's, of course."

## VIII.

## A TILT BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH.

The Liscomb party was dining for the last time together in London with their guest, Annie Miller. There were several new faces present this evening, and they were discussing the war in America. Many absurd things were said that showed they were not quite posted on their subject. These were loud people.

Some things said made the Southerner's blood boil with indignation, for they saw that these new tourists were intent on trying the metal of their fellow Americans, by these little meannesses of covert criticism.

Rene had stood it as long as she could, and sneering with fine contempt, as she looked the offenders well over, turned and said to Annie Miller, but in tones for them,

"Who ever heard of such ignorance from a gang of globe trotters? One can tell who reads, and who does not, in just a minute's talk, every time. They show mighty soon that they don't know what they are talking about."

"Oh, you can tell that they've just started out from the North, these impudent trippers, who want to publish their opinions broadcast."

*"Ce'tainly! Ce'tainly, you all can see that,*

*sholy!*" said one on the other side, in ironic imitation of the Southern dialect, but no more notice was taken of the offending "Nawthweste'ners" as Annie Miller pronounced them, but the mutton, the tart and the custard hardly got their share of patronage Rene thought, as a sullen air fell over all the guests in hearing of the tilt, so unexpectedly enacted before them.

With rosy cheeks the girls returned to their little parlor near Major and Mrs. Liscomb's bedroom. The father said at once to his daughter:

"Irene, to notice those people was extremely indelicate! I wish you would learn utter indifference. Just pay no attention, as if you had no feeling, no care for anything or anybody but for yourself. That is the element of an aristocratic bearing, and I do wish you could learn it—I certainly do wish it!"

"Well, father, I cannot. I'm not built that way, you see, but I wish I might learn it. Yes, yes, I will try to acquire this 'aristocratic bearing.'" She leaned over his shoulders as he sat before the fire and affectionately pressed her lips to his forehead.

Annie Miller said, "O I am sorry I was rude! Indeed and indeed I am, but those people were so very hateful! How could I help it?" and her dark gray eyes flashed angrily.

Mrs. Liscomb was still much amused as she thought about the occurrence, saying to herself that "a bit of a fight was fair enough for girls sometimes, especially when it was thrust under their noses, they couldn't keep out of it. Annie got her German up."

Changing the subject, Annie asked, "Did I tell you that I saw Mammy Nance and Eliza, your cook, in New York City? Well, I did. I told them I was coming over to see you in London. They begged me to bring you all home. Nance said to me:

'Marster Ned, he'd a ben well long foah now, uf he had his mammy to nuss him, sho nuff. Ah's 'fraid he'll never be hoped, sho!'

Eliza was tricked out gay as possible, but declared roundly,

'Ah hates N'York! Ah dess hates it. Ah wush Mis' Riah 'ud come right back home an' leave dat forrin country to itse'f, sose we kin all lib together lak we done libed in de Souf.'

"Isn't that a good message from the home servants?" asked Mrs. Liscomb. Continuing, she said:

"It will be a long time before we are all assembled again at the plantation, in the new house we have promised ourselves. By that time, Eliza and Mammy Nance may become so fascinated with freedom that they will never come South. I fear I have the same longing as they."

Rene replied to her mother:

"Mammy Nance will never desert us—never! Eliza was sometimes a 'sorry nigger,' but in general she has a true sort of element in her character. Not a deceitful nigger, at any rate. I wonder what they think of the 'Nawth' now?"

"Well, not much, as I told you Eliza declared. Mammy said in great contempt, 'de Nawth! de Nawth!' The last thing they both said was,

'You tole Mis' Riah she dess come home! Rene said now.'"

Ned saw Pete and Sam Thomson working at the wharf in New York. They knew he saw them, though he made no sign, and looked "pow'ful sneaky."

"Have you all got a glimpse of Royalty since you have been here?" asked Annie Miller of her friends.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Liscomb. "We went out of London about ten miles to Windsor, on a Sunday and lined up where she, the Queen, and family, would pass on their way into the church. With her were two sons and one daughter; strong, fine looking young people, plainly clad, but with a fashionable, distinguished air about them. The sight of the good and venerable Victoria and her children, the pages and footmen, the line of curtsying onlookers was all very agreeable; and one thought of her motherly character as so often described."

"As the party came nearer us, one could see that torturous eczema the Queen has on her face, making it red. The young people seemed much like other young people, not royal, with perhaps a slightly more distinguished air, and happy self-poise."

"Well, the Queen is of German descent, you know. So am I. Why can't I claim relationship, I want to know. Victoria is short; so am I. We are both a little thick. Her motherly traits are the same as any good German woman possesses; only position and education have made her cleverer. Therefore, may she have better



government over her children, I reckon, and wiser, too, no doubt. I've always admired her."

"The Germans don't particularly like her, however, let me tell you, though she be the mother of their next Empress, and the grandmother of their next Emperor; still more remote. The Germans are critical, and never wanted an English woman intermixed in their royalty. Especially did Prince Bismarck oppose the marriage of Crown Prince Frederic to this English Princess, Victoria's eldest daughter," said Annie.

"Frederic was a handsome, fine, manly young man, and has no child so distinguished. The children are far more like the English side of their house than like the German," said the Major.

Miss Rene suggested, "Well, the patience of the Germans has found out most all the great scientific discoveries of late years, and I reckon the fusion of English blood will but make a cleverer people to rule them, if they did prefer the pure German."

"It is wonderful how very poetic, romantic and musical the German people are. The ordinary citizen of the cities is often able to follow a score of an opera or a concert to its end. And they are the proudest, stiffest people one meets; that is, the upper classes. Their poor are the most respectable poor of all Europe, I have often heard, and they are so very thrifty," said Annie.

Annie Miller found she could yet remain another Sunday in London. Through the influence of one of the patrons of the Norman tower, pos-

sibly an owner, tickets were procured for all four of the party and given to Major Liscomb.

This old Norman tower had been purchased by a body of lawyers and restored, and made into a select church for this very select few.

At the right of the chancel, the seats rose one above another. In the middle of the church lay several bronze statues of knights. A good Church of England sermon was heard by the Americans, who felt indeed favored in being able to get admittance to this aristocratic assembly of old and new knights.

Annie Miller said this word Tower made her think of London Tower, and of something related of the execution block within its enclosures, where some of their great ones had met death. One of them, making his last speech there, had turned, and thanked the headsman, and asked his pardon; then laid his head himself on the block, and held it there to have it chopped off. I reckon it is a very dreadful thing to be a king, but it was a mighty convenient way to get rid of a royal wife sometimes, it seems. I saw a frightful painting once of warning to some ruler, and under it the words: 'Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown!'

Among the letters received on Monday was one from the bride of old Westminster Abbey. She and Ned were enjoying the sights of Holland. They had left London by the Great Eastern Continental Express, and crossed the North Sea at Rotterdam.

There they had visited the Cathedral, Old

Church, South Church, Groote Kerke and the Museum of Paintings.

They were now at The Hague. Ned had stood the voyage and trip very well; would rest a day, and then they would visit the Stadhuis, Museum of Paintings and ride about the city of wind-mills and water. The formal, clean, prim Dutchman was a fine study for the restless Americans.

"The art of the Netherlands catches me," wrote the bride. "I love its serious and sentimental subjects more than I can tell you. Annie Miller must visit them and copy so soon as she ever feels capable. We were glad you decided to remain longer in London, where things go livelier than here. This quiet place was, however, better for Ned, as he is still rather nervous."

"As your letter proposed, we will meet you at Antwerp. Still, I am sorry you could not see this lovely, prosy, picturesque country."

Ned and Alice afterwards visited Amsterdam, the Capital of Holland. They went to the Palace, where the royal family generally pass six weeks of the year, and where the king or queen is crowned. They visited the several galleries of art, including the Rijks Museum, the finest picture gallery of the Netherlands.

The last day in Amsterdam, just as they had returned from the church where the painting, "The Descent from the Cross," had been viewed, the heavens had opened, and such a downpour of rain was let loose as they had not seen for months. It reminded them of such rains in their dear old South. The gathering darkness of the

coming storm made the great painting doubly sad there in the church.

Ned had been rather ailing since, for the bedding was very damp; and it seemed to him that he was in an icy chill all the time. Therefore, they hastened to go from the place, fearing he might become seriously ill, to Antwerp.

When he met the parents a day or so later, he was gradually restored, and in a short time was able to join them in sight-seeing. Here the museum is rich in paintings of the Flemish school, and contains some of the masterpieces of Rubens.

The great Gothic Cathedral, with its chimes of ninety-nine bells, also contains paintings by the same master. In front of the Cathedral stands the large grill-work fountain piece, wrought by Rubens. It is told that this sort of wrought iron grill work was his trade; but the maiden he loved and wanted to marry told him she would wed only an artist, so he set himself to work to become a great painter, in order to win the woman of his heart's fervent desire. To this circumstance, the world owes her thanks for the artist Rubens. Another triumph for Cupid!

"O, Ned, how much the world owes to love is a vast and inconceivable reckoning. Is it not?"

"Yes, I should say. But what is the worst of it is, that so much evil, sorrow, misery is caused by it. Witness my poor sister, Rene. I fear she'll never be quite herself again. She made a compact with me to give up Budd Stone forever. She cannot do it! She loves him yet."

"My dear, good husband, we were only prom-

ised to each other that time of the house party, on the eve of the day of her wedding which was to be, and was not. Don't you remember?" and she moved closer to him.

"Yes, yes, I shall never forget that wretched next day either, when I had murder in my heart. It is indeed a bad wind that blows no good to anybody, as father always says, or something like that. I never can quote anything correctly."

He looked fondly into the tender, dark eyes of his happy bride, as they both thought so sadly about Rene.

"My dear sweetheart, I am going to tell you something which I intended never to mention to you, because it might put you into a passion, and because I was not sure of what I suspected myself, and I feared you would say, as you used to, to Rene and me, 'I think you are a little off.'"

"You will promise me now not to care much about what I tell you, in any unreasonable degree, I mean. Well, have you seen a ghost of any of these dead and titled people we have heard, read and seen so much of since we came to the Netherlands?"

"No, I have not seen one, but I am afraid I have heard one, and one we both have desired to forget, too."

"O, are you superstitious? I also have heard some sounds here in the hotel that were incomprehensible to me. I could not sleep one night, and you were sleeping at about forty knots an hour, so I did not wake you to keep me company, but I asked the guard in the corridor what the noise might be. He said something which, of



course, I hardly understood. I think, however, he said it was the servants preparing coffee berries to make the morning's coffee, with some sort of a machine. O, I don't really know what he said. American English is not fluently spoken anywhere in Europe, I'm told, and he tried the Continental."

Alice felt a little impatient.

"Now, you are making fun of me, Ned. I will only tell you that my ghost was not preparing the coffee berry for next morning's breakfast. That is all."

"No, that is not all, and I want the whole confession," and Ned put his arm about his wife, saying:

"Tell me this thing you meant not to tell me. There can be no secrets between us, nor mysteries, since we stood up together in the presence of that noble congregation of dead and the noble live Americans there, in Westminster. Now, out with it."

"It is really not worth so much talk. Do you remember that evening in London when Rene was too ill to go down to dinner, and you and your father went ahead, and stopped at the office till we others came on?"

"Yes, I believe I recall the time."

"Well, as we leisurely passed along on the floor just beneath our rooms, I heard an extraordinarily fine tenor voice humming and practising. It seemed to me, the song Budd Stone sang that last night we ever saw him, and certainly it was his voice! I almost started out of my skin. Now, wasn't that strange?"

"A little strange perhaps, but all fine tenors of the same timber resemble each other, sometimes, very closely."

"I thought you would say that, Ned, and I hope it was not Budd Stone, but I have a strange impression that it was really his voice, more matured, much improved. It would be a pity if Rene heard it."

"I am glad I had no inkling of it in London, but Sis and I are under a compact, you know."

## IX.

## SIGHT-SEEING—THE SKELETON.

From Antwerp our tourists went to Brussels for one day, only glancing at the paintings, the palaces, City Hall, the Cathedral of St. Gudule and St. Michael, Column of Congress and Martyr's Monument.

The next day they rode out to visit the Battle-field of Waterloo. The weather being cold and wet, they did not mount the long tier of steps leading to the monument, but took away all the literature concerning the battle that was obtainable at the foot of the immense mound, artificially made, to study it in the warmth of their rooms, and at leisure.

The Liscomb party spent Sunday in Cologne. In the Cathedral they saw the renowned stained glass windows. In a crypt of the Church of St. Gereon they looked upon the sacred relics. They also saw those in the Church, of the Eleven Thousand Virgins. They heard the wonderful chimes, whose bells were made from cannon captured from enemies in battle.

"And truly they are the most musical chimes on earth!" so all the party declared. Whether it is altogether owing to the metal of which they are made, or partly from the peculiar atmosphere,

they are truly most remarkably musical and impressive chimes.

Commenting on what they saw at Cologne, Rene said :

"Really, does any one believe that eleven thousand virgins were slain just outside this city at one time, many of them of high rank, as says the story?"

"Perhaps that is as believable as that the finger bone, we were told in the crypt, belonged once to our Lord, and that those nails came out of his cross. You remember, we were shown some of the virgins' skulls, too," said the Major. "One must not question too closely, and we must not criticize, nor doubt. The very devout feel an exaltation of spirit in the presence of these relics I noticed, which is perhaps good for them, at least, and they get a great deal of money from tourists for the exhibition to use in church work, and that is certainly needful in all communities, and at all times," said Mrs. Liscomb.

"These maidens were travelling to Mecca, were they not?" asked Ned's wife.

"I think so. I cannot remember how it was, I'm sure," said the Major; "a myth, I believe."

It happened that the weather was fine for the time of year when the party took passage on a large steamer for a voyage on the Rhine. They passed old feudal castles, crumbling towers, quaint old towns, and vine-clad slopes, many of them celebrated in history, legend, song and painter's art. As they passed a Roman Tower, Ned's wife related a story told as a fact, of an

English girl artist, who stopped at Bonn to paint the views of river and surrounding country there.

"She was known to none in the house she boarded in, at all. One morning she took her material and went out, apparently to sketch, and never returned. If they thought of her at the boarding and lodging house, it was without much interest, and with a shrug of the shoulders, saying:

*"Ach, die Engländerin sind droll! und so viele Studenten sind hier."*

Days, weeks and months went by. Nothing was heard of her. Somebody said she was seen near a steamer landing. That seemed to indicate her departure, for other scenes to copy, and no investigation nor search was made.

One time, some years afterwards, an elderly Englishman and wife came to Bonn, made inquiries about the English girl artist, who had come here some years before to paint, and had very soon disappeared.

It happened that one of those old boarders in the same house where the girl had taken board and lodging heard those inquiries, found she had never returned to her friends anywhere. It struck him for the first time that she had perhaps met death by some accident near Bonn and said so. He became interested now. He joined the elderly English couple in a tour about the country around Bonn, not hoping to find trace of her, but to discover any probable way that she might have met accidental death there, or near Coblenz.

So soon as the English party came in sight of this old Roman Tower they hurried along to ex-



amine it. They could not see inside at all, and the door seemed to have become a part of the solid wall. The German gentleman with them said:

"That door has not been opened in a hundred years, I'm sure; but the persistent Englishman procured implements the next morning, and they came out with them and a ladder to use, in case they could not open the door. They had not asked permission, for it could hardly have been obtained, and they did not want to find out if it might, but went to work.

They tried the door—worked hard. The ladder would not reach the top of the roofless tower. Again they worked at the door till it was partly opened. The Englishman went in first, and the others were sure from his exclamations that he had made the discovery they sought, and followed him into the half-filled up tower.

The skeleton of a person sat against the wall, half supported by the dust, sand and leaves carried into the top of the tower by storm and wind for the many years that it had been there. Birds had built nests about it.

Digging around it, they found evidence that it was the skeleton of an artist. They all believed it that of the English girl, who had disappeared so many years before.

Commenting, they wondered that nobody had found it long ago. In fact, no one had ever hunted for the lonely, ambitious girl, who had few friends. This few had believed that she had purposely deserted them, until several years had

passed, and they knew it was too late to find out anything about her."

By the time the story was finished, the great round brick Roman Tower was out of sight. Still thinking about it, Rene said:

"Well, I hope the sad story is not true. Why could she never get out?"

"O, but it is true! It was told me by a teacher of music in our boarding school up "Nawth." She was born at Coblenz; was at school in Bonn. She told it for a fact. I think the skeleton was discovered since she came on the scene," persisted Ned's wife.

Many interesting and historic places came into view and soon gave place to others, as they journeyed over the waters of the Rhine; the old toll house of the Robber Barons among them.

An officer of the vessel presented Major Liscomb a beautifully gotten up, elaborated and illustrated copy of the poem, "The Lurlei." Aside, Ned said: "We will postpone the reading until we have ample time to dig it out," though they pretended to read it while the giver was present, and greatly admired the engravings. Ned had studied German for a short time; the last year he had spent at college, at the time the war between the North and South put an end to his studies so suddenly.

They wished also to lose no view of the shore while the grand tableau was passing before them.

At last they passed the Lurlei rock, and looked upon its battling, gurgling, uprushing waters, and thought of the fabled siren who lured to destruction all who listened to her song. Com-

menting anew on the wonders of the German fancy for tales of dragons, fairies, wood nymphs and goblins, they ended too quickly the day on the Rhine.

At Biebrich they took carriages for Wiesbaden, a health resort. The waters of the hot springs reminded the Major of those of the hot springs of Salt Lake City, and of Arkansas, in America. They took fine baths, and enjoyed the Cur-Saal, though the throng of the busiest season was over. The weather was too cold and Major Liscomb was too feeble to care for carriage excursions.

As Ned grew stronger, his father seemed to be falling into that last stage of aged manhood and indifference, common to mankind in the "sere and yellow leaf" of life. He was impatient to know that the war was over, for he began to yearn for a quiet home in his beloved South again. It seemed to him that that old plantation could yield him more pleasure and comfort than this everlasting touring among strange peoples of strange languages could furnish.

He tried to conceal this, for him, the first sign of old age, from the other members of his family, always wishing that they might enjoy life in the way most pleasing and instructive to them.

Eagerly he scanned the newspapers and read the letters from home awaiting him in the hotel. They all told him of the humiliating end of the great struggle, though all of them said nothing like it in words. The military movements alone revealed it to him. He was reading between the lines.

Christmas had passed without any particular observation of the season by them. They knew of the midnight mass in the Catholic churches, and on Christmas morning heard the serenade in the court of the hotel, by some cloaked lads under a tutor from some orphan society. Nearly every window opening on the court had been opened to let in the music and to let out the tiny packages of money that the lodgers of the house wished to donate to the orphanage. These solicitors of alms and the solicitors for church contributions being permitted to ply their business only during the holidays; beggary not being tolerated, unless in some happily disguised form, as they noticed a few days later in Berlin, in a vender of flowers. A sort of child's wagon was hauled by a young woman through the streets of a limited quarter, in which sat an elderly, helpless pauper woman. She was selling flowers, bouquets, nosegays and boutonnieres. When a customer appeared, the daughter stopped the wagon. The customers often paid for flowers, then laid them back into the vender's lap. These flowers were rather regularly sent to the old woman by rich people who had used them to ornament their own homes for a day or an evening, and when replaced by fresh ones, sent off to her the older ones, which she now sold on the street.

These first days in Berlin they spent in sight-seeing, for the weather was fine and brighter than one generally meets with in the rather cloudy and dark city in winter. Taking a carriage, they were driven through the beautiful avenue Unterden Linden. Within three-quarters of a mile they

saw the Brandenburg Gate, built in imitation of the Propylaeum at Athens; the Guard House, the three royal palaces, the Dom, the oldest church in the city, where they afterwards saw the Crown Prince of Prussia, the University, the Royal Opera House, the Bridge, the Arsenal and the Academy of Art, besides the many statues. The largest of the palaces is where the ruling family always lives, and is colossal in size. All of them are gray in color.

Driving back, they went from the Brandenburg Gate right on into the Tier Garten, the largest and most natural woodland of any park they had seen. An Opera House for summer amusements and some old, low palaces were here seen, with the usual park bridges, lakes and rustic seats.

The Car of Victory above the Gate had been carried away to France once by victors of battles, but after Waterloo had been returned to Prussia. Since then the eagle and the iron cross had been bestowed upon the figure of the goddess in the Car by the patriotic city.

The Americans were fortunate enough to hear the music of the two principal music halls. Once it was a Beethoven evening, being the birthday of the composer, and the Germans celebrate very faithfully the birthdays of their great people. Even the day of their deaths is noticed in families of any persons of royal blood by visits to their tombs and the placing of wreaths there.

They heard the opera of *Die Meister Singer*, also in the language and manner intended by the author. Finding this language rich and beauti-



ful in song, far beyond any praises they had heard of it.

The Liscomb party went fifteen miles out from Berlin to Charlottenburg one day. The surrounding park is the pleasure resort of rich and poor in summer. In the grounds is a small Doric Temple in which is a beautiful monument to Queen Louise of Prussia, and said to be the masterpiece of the great sculptor Rauch. One can well believe it.

An immense statue is in the Tier Garten, nearer Berlin. On their idol's birthday more than half of the city visits the place, for the decorations are magnificent all about the statue. The Germans love flowers and know how to make grand and impressive effects with them.

Potsdam, sometimes called the Versailles of Prussia, they visited one cold, raw day, and did most of their sight-seeing from the carriage, though they did leave it to go into the old Palace, built by Frederic the First, a palace without any comforts.

They also went into some of the apartments of the Kaiser's Summer Palace, such being permitted when the family is away. This was of course more modern and comfortable, built after some victory in war.

One morning they got a glimpse of the Old Kaiser and his son, Frederic. Noticing a little sensation on the street, they looked out and saw the white feather of, perhaps, the royal footman sailing along, pages and royalty disappearing quickly behind superb horses.

## X.

## THE PROCLAMATION OF FREEDOM.

The Americans were anxious to know what the Proclamation of Freedom had effected for the slave or for the South. According to all they could find out about it, there was little difference to the slave or to the South. In the first place, all of the slaves did not find out they were free for a long time.

In the cities and towns they knew, but made no fuss about it. They got a little money in their hands to buy their own clothing and food, and that was all they thought about it yet. After a little they were aware that freedom meant a lot more for them; made no demonstration still.

They knew not exactly what to do with freedom, and had heard that the Yankee only wanted them for themselves, and would treat them worse than they had ever been treated in the South, besides freezing them in the Northern climate, so many remained in the land they already knew.

A few followed the invading army, and risked their luck in obtaining transportation North—sometimes getting stranded along the route. Being used to hardships, they generally got out of bad situations creditably. A few be-

lieved the Yankee would come, and get them in due time; the negro's long tried and stolid patience answering him now for the shrewd intelligence of the coming years. This sort had remained South, too.

Many were really attached to the old master, who had given them their little cabins, their pigs and their gardens. They remembered how the mistress always came with her medicine chest to attend them when ill and these argued now:

"Marster is done gone. Dey has killed him a fightin' fuh his prope'ty. Ole Mis' can't raise dem chillun' by huhsef; we dess hope huh. She can't spah we-uns. We all hope huh, an' stay longer on dis yer plantation."

So these remained, all the more faithful for the sweet breezes of freedom fanning them!

A lot has been preached and written about "this creature of the jungle," but the brute of civilization is a more dangerous creature, and could hardly be trusted in situations that the jungle man has had to serve in, for he is a born anarchist. The other creature is of tardy, and always begrudged, and withheld education! Caste will always provide place and position in social life; no matter what laws are made, and it is a pity for one race to set itself up as enemy to another, especially when that other is so useful to it, doing all its hard and disagreeable labor, as it always has done.

The Major was stunned and silent for a long time. He was, however, like the Virginian of a century before; like the Virginian of the beginning of the Civil War, he had not, he did not

believe in human slavery in reality, though he had bought and sold almost a thousand of them, but there were not enough white laborers who could endure to work in the hot tobacco and cotton fields and slavery had furnished help adapted to it; therefore, he had followed in line with his brother of the Southland: bought, sold and worked them.

Now he was wondering if the black would remain South, even when better rewarded for his labor in the North.

He felt, too, that the negro could not have been safely held in slavery much longer. He had seen the luxury of his master. He had learned in two centuries, slowly to be sure, the value of wealth, and was figuring out who had produced that wealth; why should he himself not have a little of that, too. He was beginning to think that if he worked for a stated pay he might also lay by riches for himself and his numerous progeny. The slave was beginning to see that money was the first and greatest power of civilization; therefore, he was ready for and, in general, craved freedom. Remotely, he had believed the Yankee would eventually help him to it. One evening the Major was talking about it.

"The South knows that many uprisings on remote plantations had been feared long before the Civil War. She knows also that slavery had outgrown its land limitations and that they wished to invade the territories with it, though the recent Congress, and even Washington him-

self, had signed declaration against it, shortly before he quit public office the last time."

"The whole world, the North as well, have been handicapped often, and always, by laws that their anarchic inclinations despise, but find it wiser and more diplomatic to obey than to court a war, with its consequent and unpreventable horrors; its barbaric slaughter! And it is well!"

Ned yawned as if bored, and to veil his real vexation from his father, feigned to re-read his letters. A crisis in the affairs of his country was passing, and one that did not please the hot blood of the Secessionist. Ned was a gentleman in his very soul, and he would not wound his aged father by blurting out the ugly things in his mind. His father handed him the newspaper, and pointed out the odious proclamation. The young man read it verbatim, and merely said:

"Well, that is as concise as a marriage license!" His face flushed red with the passion he was endeavoring to conceal.

The family visited the picture gallery where are two thousand four hundred paintings of many schools, many of them by Italian and Flemish masters. There were a few that these unsophisticated Americans thought fit for obscurity and oblivion only.

The Sistene Madonna here by Raphael is considered one of the finest in the world of art. They went into the Court church to hear the grand organ, built by Silberman, and into the Kreutzkirche, with its renowned sculptures and beautiful interior.

They saw the Bruhl Terrace, on the banks of



the Elbe, a popular promenade in summer, where is always rendered delightful music, and friend greets friend socially, pleasantly.

In the Picture Gallery they met some attractive American young women. Rather shyly they spoke with them, finally introducing themselves.

They found the girls were there to study Art, Music and German. Being Southerners, from a part of the country quite in the line of battle, in fact from the direct seat of the war, Major Liscomb believed they had been sent away from home more for safety than for study, indeed.

The students invited their new friends to visit them in the evening, which they did. They talked to their heart's content of their beautiful country and its cruel war. They were bitter against the North and the Yankee.

Spirited, jolly girls as they were, they bantered words back and forth with the Major, whom they at once suspected of being only a half friend to the cause they enthusiastically defended.

They were much interested, too, in piano and violin music, as well as the copying of the paintings they had undertaken. Rene became greatly interested in their colony and wished to join them for the winter in their art lessons.

It was late when they returned to the hotel, and her parents were pleased that Rene's evening had been so profitable to her. Indeed she seemed to return to the youth and joy of other days.

The Major found out all he could about this little colony of girl students. He also found

that he had known relatives of the young widow, who chaperoned them, of other days, in business transactions, so he consented to Rene's sojourn with them, so long as it might please her to remain and pursue the same three studies they were engaged in. Particularly music was the study her family most desired for her. She preferred art.

Seeing her so settled in the narrow, curtained-off quarters assigned her, and which girls do not mind a bit, the others of the Liscombs traveled on to Vienna, where they halted again for a few days. They were charmed with the Austrian capital; this fair rival of France's fair capital; its fashions of millinery always more intense in coloring, after the German intuition, perhaps, yet always a rival in gowns.

Here they added gowns to their wardrobe, suitable to the warmer regions they meant to live in for a while. They sent Rene an evening dress and some other things she might need in her new situation at Dresden.

These things accomplished, they turned again to visiting picture galleries, palaces of the House of Hapsburg, the Treasury of Antiquities and coins in the Imperial Burg and at the Belvidere.

As a lover of music and possessing a fine ear, Ned was quite happy to hear renditions of the great Gluck, Mozart, Hayden, Beethoven and Schubert in this, the city of most of their compositions; and of their final resting places within its environments. He lingered long over the relics of these great masters wherever found.

They did not hurry to travel southward, as they had planned to. Ned said "Vienna is good enough for me," and they remained here to revel in music and the gaities of the winter. They had had little gaiety, Rene and Ned, since coming into their years of majority, because of the war, and Rene's unfortunate matrimonial adventure, and Ned's college work.

Though it was not the season to see the Prater at its best, they drove through this wonderful park one fine day when they had taken a carriage to drive out to Schonbrunn. Here, too, are parks that can hardly be described. In summer they are simply grand works of art, wrought out by the landscape gardener.

There are seats, arbors, walls of verdure and a fountain. The imperial château here sheltered Marie Louise, while her husband languished and died at St. Helena. Here died their son, the future king of Rome, as his great father had planned, and the bed on which he died is still shown.

They attended service in the most prominent churches, but above everything else in Vienna, they enjoyed the music. In America, they had never such bands, such orchestras, and they revelled in it to their heart's content while the opportunity lasted.

Letters from Annie Miller, letters from Rene reached them. They seemed equally happy in the enjoyment of opera, concert and church music. The opera season was on, and their souls feasted on the best music that had ever been produced. Often and often they had tickets, free,

to hear the trial of some new artist in his musical début. Some of them had talent and skill, showing a little hope for a future, but under such strict judges and critics as Germans set up, a very few of these hard-worked amateurs can ever be anything but teachers.

The girls wrote: "We don't aspire to ever be granted even a hearing before these mighty magistrates." Few American girls ever wish to, after getting into all these nerve-trying secrets of the art of music. It is all too impossible for them. We don't love to work hard, so we will always be loiterers just outside the heavenly gates of the divine art!"

"Well, that is something," said Ned's wife.

"Yes, yes, it is something to be able to appreciate classic music. In fact one must be cultured, refined, somewhat posted in it, too, to enjoy it, I know, so I say again, it is an accomplishment to be able to appreciate it, and as the girls expressed it, "be loiterers outside the heavenly gates;" continuing: "So many great people cannot enjoy music. They confess they know nothing whatever of its divine—its holy thrall. I am sorry for them always, for I see how it is. One has to think of it, drink of it, live in its sacred environs, to really enjoy its exaltations, and these are also romantic, poetic natures."

They visited the galleries of Lichtenstein. Went to church at St. Stephen's, and into the crypt containing the remains of royalty.

At evening they often commented on the things most interesting to them. They were reminded here of the Grand Duke of Austria, who

had been lured away by the offer of a throne in Mexico by the French, who wanted a foothold on the soil of that country, and then deserted him.

At Ned's suggestion, they now left the decisions about traveling to him. They continued southward over the most picturesque route in Europe.

This railway is the first over the Alpine passes ever constructed. It is carried along the face of precipices by a succession of tunnels, bridges, galleries and viaducts, and affords a great variety of impressive views, and is considered one of the greatest triumphs of engineering skill the whole world affords. This winter had been mild, and our friends found their trip through the Noric Alps most agreeable.

One woman in their van could not look upon the scenery at all, but hid her eyes and wept over its awesomeness. The Liscombs seemed to be braced up by that same awfulness of outlook. Nobody could talk. All conversation seemed hushed as if some impressive funeral were in progress during much of the route.



## XI.

## THE YANKEE SERGEANT.

The tourists next stopped at Venice. This city of the sea is built on a cluster of islands. Its crumbling castles are said to have been built by the nobles of Rome, when they fled before the conquering Huns. There is one noted old well of fresh water in Venice and many shops.

The ebb and flow of the sea left an unpleasant odor. The palaces were shaky and all the buildings seemed ready to topple into the sea, which the Campanile succeeded in, some years later. They visited the glass factory, where a great variety of different kinds of glassware is manufactured; had their initials blown into glass balls for souvenirs.

They bought laces in the lace factory; saw laces worth a prince's ransom. Of views and cards they also laid in a supply to send to friends at home. The Bridge of Sighs was the last place a prisoner saw the light of heaven. When he crossed it, it was after sentence of death, which the final Triumvirate had passed upon him in a chamber in the upper part of the palace of the one time rulers of Venice; that was the Doges. Here they saw the frescoes also on the walls of the palace.

They took a steamer on the Grand Canal, that is the Broadway of Venice, for a tour of its islands. The lunatic asylum occupied one; a Monastery of Monks occupied another with a printing office. Here it was that Lord Byron studied the Armenian language. In the office of the hotel it was said he and his friend Moore had chatted, and a room was pointed out, said to have been occupied by him. All in all, they enjoyed Venice exceedingly well. The monks showed some of Byron's handwriting. The Colonnade ran all around the open square, where were all the principal shops. They were in St. Mark's Cathedral during a Sunday morning service. At the end of the Rialto Bridge was the loggia or "den," in which Shakespeare wrote the Merchant of Venice, culled it from an old Italian novel. Rialto also is the name of the largest of this group of islands with its old gray villas and its 145 water streets, over which the gondola carries one. They visited the Art Gallery one morning.

One moonlight night they took a couple of gondolas for a little outing on the water. Each gondolier wore a bright scarf. Ned and Alice, like two childish lovers, always liked to be alone to talk sweet nonsense, to indulge in romancing. To-night was the kind to lure them into it.

"Darling," she said, "how beautiful is the sky and water, and how sweet that we can be here together, after your long and terrifying illness! O, I am so happy, I feel almost exalted out of my senses!"

"Three years ago—Oh, how much has hap-

pened in four years! But three years ago, we did not think to be in this old city! Yes, this old city of the sea with its many tragedies and different governments and its always wash—wash of water. It is all so agreeable!”

“Would you like to live here, Ned?”

“No, Alice, I must go home. I do not talk before father, but I must go home. I have a right in the new administration of our States’ Government. If we cannot hold on to the Confederacy, we can do almost as much for ourselves in getting the right hold on State’s Rights; you see, State’s Rights!”

“Ned, you bore arms against the United States Government. It will be a long time before the North will ever let you have much power in the affairs of Government!”

“Yes, I know it, but I shall make a fine effort to help my loved South to her rights. Now, you mark what I’ve said. If the South surrenders her arms and stops fighting, she’ll not change her opinions. She’ll hold on to States’ Rights till the last horn blows.”

“Do you suppose she’ll surrender? Can’t they in some way hold on to the Confederacy?”

“No, no, they haven’t the men and now that the negro is free they’ll have no more cotton to sell, so where will they get money? Let us not talk. I hate the North so, that I shall stamp the bottom out of this gondola if we do.”

Quickly changing the subject, Alice said “I’ve been thinking much about my dear mother of late, and wondering where she is. Those Northern relatives of hers, to whom she went when

I ran away to follow you, are enemies to us Southerners, of course! I've had no news of her since the letter I received when we were at that temporary hospital on the Hudson River. She had been well received by them, and I hope she is still there.

"She wrote that my cousins, Henry and Joseph, were both in the army of Yankees, South, and sent me photographs of them in their uniform. One is Sergeant; the other is a second Lieutenant. I will show them to you the first time I get to ransacking in that old trunk again. It is in that one with the black strap about it. The one I told you was father's."

"So your cousins, Joseph and Henry Wood, are in the Northern army, and your sweetheart, Ned, was in the Southern army, shooting at them. A disagreeable situation! Do you believe they'll ever condone your grievous sin in loving and marrying a Johnny Reb? That is what they called us Southerners. 'Say, you Johnny Reb, got any tobacco?'"

"Ah reckon, you blasted Yankee." They had just been put out as picket guard, and so soon as the officer of the day on each side disappeared, they had sneaked a little nearer each other. "Give me a chaw, won't you?"

"That is strange, I'm sure," said his wife, laughing.

"Well, we'd shoot each other in a second if necessary, but a tobacco famine was always a leveler, I tell you. It made us akin."

Alice laughed doubtingly.

"I tell you it is true. The youth that shot me,

gave me drink from his canteen in ten minutes afterward, as they retreated back over the field where I had fallen. Blood was on my lips—salty blood, and I remember wishing for water. I suppose I called for it; anyhow he gave me water out of his canteen.”

“The boy thought he had killed me, and I know he was sorry. I thought the same thing, and felt no anger as I heard the rattle in my lungs. Alice, I wish he knew that I lived over. Only God knows if he were not soon killed, perhaps in the same battle!”

“Ned, you don’t feel now like stamping the bottom out of the gondola, do you?”

“No, no, only when I think of those who led us into the war. These quarrelsome fellows in Congress in 1860.”

The gondola had brought them back to the hotel, where the others were waiting for them, while other gondolas of singers were amusing them.

“Alice, daughter,” since Rene was not with them, the Major often called her daughter, “have you remarked these wonderful tenors? Listen to them!”

“Haven’t I? They captured me the first time I heard them. This is most surely the country of tenors. With just a simple violin or even an accordeon, they are perfectly ravishing. I suppose they are mostly Tenore Robusto in quality. All I have heard are that sort.”

“I wish we Americans loved and indulged more in music. I did practice some in college,



you know," said Ned. "Let us do more of it hereafter."

"I adore music!" declared his wife. "We will, indeed we will, have more music in our home. We both have had instruction in the art. What could be sweeter than a weekly home *musicale*, out at the old plantation? Let us particularly observe all the parts of all the renditions we may hear from now on, and carry home with us the librettos; the scores of whatever we can get."

"Better say of whatever we can hope to manage without a leader."

"It has just occurred to my mind that we can get musical people, even professional musicians, to pass vacations out at the plantation, and they will help us."

"Provided always if we can get servants. Professional people must eat, and one must have cooks you know."

"We may live without art, and live without books,

But civilized man cannot live without cooks.'"

"Oh, stop, Ned! Yes, that kills all pleasure for all womankind. It makes most social and educational enjoyments pall on her mind; that everlasting care of cooking; catering for it, if she really don't cook herself," said his wife.

"Don't think about it, wife. I hope the South may keep enough niggers to cook for us. They can't all get away, and the plentiful little ones they have will soon be grown, to cook for us."

While packing their effects the next morning to leave Venice, their latest love, as they all ardently termed the old city, Alice found the photographs she had promised to show her husband. He saw in the First Lieutenant only the hated Northern blue uniform; but in that of the Sergeant, Henry Wood, he seemed to see more, for he looked still longer and closer upon it.

Annie, noticing the particular interest he paid it, left her work, and putting her arm about his neck, asked him,

"Is he not a fine, large fellow? He was not yet twenty-one, this Yankee cousin of mine, when he was in his first battle; but, Ned dear, what is it? Are you ill again?"

He did not answer, but looked yet closer upon Sergeant Wood's photograph and his hated blue uniform. Then, dropping it on the table before him, said brokenly:

"That soldier is the one who shot me! As sure as I am here, it was he, too, who gave me to drink out of his canteen!" He took up the photo again and looked upon it with changing and awful countenance. He saw again the battlefield—heard the screech and ping, and the shrill whistle of bullets; saw his gray-coated men falling about him; saw the hated blue coats rushing nearer! He had shouted "Fix bayonets!" Then a blow, a sting on the upper part of his breast! He knew that he fell! He heard the blood gurgling in his throat and lungs. He was wretchedly thirsty, with salty blood on his lips. Then this big boy gave him drink out of his canteen; this Sergeant who had shot him. He re-

called again that hateful victorious yell of the enemy's men through it all.

Just then, Major Liscomb rapped on the door, saying,

"It is time to go, my children!"

Ned pulled himself together and staggered to the rack for his overcoat.

As they traveled along, Ned did no talking, and as he was looking ill and exhausted, his mother turned to Alice and asked of her,

"Is Ned not so well this morning?" while looking anxiously at him.

"No, he is not so very well this morning, but he is not so very ill, or I should have told you to wait over in Venice until to-morrow."

Mrs. Liscomb took from her hand-bag a tiny flask of spirits she carried, as a duty to the party, and begged him to take a swallow. He did pretend to, but really he could not. He was unable to swallow it now.

In after months he told Alice that he could hardly remember how they had left Venice

En route, however, when his mother seemed to pay no further attention to him, Ned said in an undertone to Alice:

"Tell nothing! Women talk so much. I want to be quiet."

So Alice held her tongue, thinking "how nervous he is! Just as he used to say when he was so ill. Women talk so much; be quiet!" Now, I believe they do talk too much. All the silly things they are always gabbling about, only lets men see their lame and weak characters. I am going to be more reserved. Folks will think

more of a person they don't so familiarly understand, I am sure. Glad I got to thinking about it. Thinking is better, anyhow!"

So Alice held her tongue, and there was little conversation between the Major and his wife until they reached Florence, and had slept.

Then they visited the Uffizzi and Pitti galleries of paintings, sculptures and other art treasures, the museums, the Cathedral of Sante Maria del Flore. They went into the church of Santa Croce to see the tombs of Michael Angelo, Galileo, Macchiavelli. At the former convent of Onafrio, they saw the picture by Raphael of the Last Supper. They visited the tombs of The Medici. The famous Florentine gallery contains the Venus de Medici, the groups of the Niobe, and the richest collection of paintings and sculptures in the world.

The tourists remained several days in Florence, to rest and to study its great art treasures. Letters and newspapers from home gave the movements of the two armies. The grand finale seemed to be not far off, however reluctant the one party was to acknowledge it yet.

The North had its secret societies to fight, as well as the open armies at the South. Lee had sought to get the battlefield on Northern soil, where he could better clothe and feed his army, as they were almost naked and almost starving.

Then at Richmond, they were finally cut off from everything, by the beleaguering army of the North. What more could be done?

## XII.

## SURRENDER—ASASSINATION.

The Liscombs went from Florence to Rome, where they were entertaining themselves earnestly in sight-seeing, in the city of all others, they had been most interested since childhood. They felt blest, beyond anticipation even, in being upon the real streets of old Rome, as they yet termed the city.

They had visited the Colosseum by day and again by moonlight. A guide went with them to every place they visited, explaining all things explainable, from the rise to the decline of the power of Rome, as demonstrated from the recent discoveries and excavations.

One morning they stood within the ruins of the Caracalla Baths, where excavations were still, in a small way, going on. The marble facings of this colossal structure, as well as those of the Colosseum, had been removed by victors in war, and carried away to decorate churches and public buildings elsewhere.

It was hard to believe when at the Colosseum that they were looking upon the arena where human lives had gone out, in sight of the nobles of the city; in sight of the exalted to high and honored seats, the Vestal Virgins and many



thousands of others. The dens under the arena were seen, where the wild beasts kept for this spectacle had been housed.

They visited Basilicas, which in the olden time had been palaces of Justice, as well as churches; went to the House of Cæsar, the Colossus of Nero, several Temples, Arch of Titus, The Portico Margaritaria, Arch of Drusus, Catacombs of St. Calixtus, Tombs of Saints, and Tomb of Hadrian, now Castle of St. Angelo, Circus Marentius; saw the second and fourth Walls of Rome. Another day they went out to the Ap-pian Way. Visited the Tomb of Cecilia Marella, the Camere and the Loggia of Raphael.

They were in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican, and in its museum of Sculptures; looked out of a window in the Vatican, upon its gardens where the Pope took his drive or walk each day, as he never left the Vatican, only to cross a paved space to go into St. Peter's, and, indeed, was carried there.

"I am sure we might profitably pass a month here," said Alice one day.

"There is nothing to prevent it, I hope," replied her husband. "Only let us not hurry. I want to keep these great historic sights clear in my memory. When we hurry from one thing to another, I lose trace of the things I want most to remember."

Again they were out sight-seeing, and went to St. Paul's Gate, and to the Pyramid Caius Cestus, and into the Basilica of St. Paul, outside the Walls; then to the Remuria Hill. Visited St. Peter in Vincoli, the Moses of Michael Angelo,

the Trevi Fountain; had a fine view of Rome from St. Pietro in Montoria, as also a view of the Campagna, from the same place.

At St. Peter's one morning they heard a concert of priests' voices. The whole group of them swung censers, and wore extraordinarily fine and showy lace cassocks. "All were solemnly, gracefully handsome," as Alice expressed it.

The great toe of the Colossal statue of St. Peter, in the center of the vast interior, was really half kissed away by the devotees of the church, as they passed over the huge blocks of marble of the floor during the centuries of its existence.

The sonorous intonations of the mass service reminded them of the service in St. Paul's in London, where the intonations are about the same.

The Cemetery of St. Lorenzo is the great modern burial ground of Rome. It adjoins the church of the same name. St. Pudentianca, thought to be the most ancient of all the churches in Rome, occupies the site of the house of Pudens, the Senator, with whom St. Paul lodged.

Tired from their day's sight-seeing, all four of them were resting in the parents' apartment. Ned was lying at full length on the couch and one remarked how his fine, tall physique was beginning to take on muscularity once more. His large blue eyes were now and then almost hidden by the drowsy eyelids. Alice was in an arm chair at his head, and sometimes tossed his new curly hair about in playful movement.

The little English paper, published in Rome, to which all the English speaking colony in the city were subscribers, was brought up to them. The Major unfolded it and read aloud to the family:

"Surrender of Lee's Army to General Grant at Appomattox!"

Ned sat up on the couch. "Read on, quick; read all of it, father!" he cried out, very nervously excited. He never knew why he put on his coat as he listened.

"Grant was very generous in the hour of his triumph. He offered honorable terms, which Lee accepted. The surrender was made April ninth. There was no bitterness manifested between those who had lost and those who had won in this great conflict. Men in blue and men in gray gathered around the same camp fires; the well-fed Northern soldier sharing his rations with the half-starved Southern brother. In war enemies; in peace friends. The Confederate forces in other parts of the country have laid down their arms."

Ned muttered in undertone:

"Well, I'll be hanged!" although he had expected just that sort of news, but the idea of the brotherly friendship was a "staggerer" he said afterwards and he felt disgusted. Then he thought of Henry Wood and his canteen of water that time on the battlefield. He only said:

"Well, I am glad it is over now!" The father had found more news from America as he turned the paper inside out and read again aloud:

"The whole of the North is simply mad with joy over the surrender! Bells have been ringing for hours. Drums have been beating, till one might believe pandemonium has been let loose. In the rustic places men ride horses like mad, shouting, screaming, through the streets! The floral decorations are in evidence everywhere. Horses are garlanded with them and gladness is expressed in every possible way. All the land is lighted by bonfires. Clubs are singing."

"This little sheet cannot, does not tell it all, Alas!" said Mrs. Liscomb. "How many hide away to weep while this public rejoicing is going on, only God knows! These know that the slaughtered son, the slain father cannot come back, and their own hearts are broken forever! How many women will have to toil and toil all the rest of their lives to support men who will return broken in health and spirit!"

"Oh, wife, stop! Let us rejoice with the wretched people who are glad, and I warrant you that means everybody North or South. Rejoice, rejoice at any rate that we have our son, though we lost so much of our property!"

Ned was walking back and forth from the bedroom to the little parlor, much agitated, though in a state of mind from which a burden had been lifted. He hardly knew whether to rejoice or curse, when he thought of the labor, the money, the lives that had been wasted in vain, and the ruined lives of the young men of the South.

They could have no particular political standing. In fact, he had planned a life in politics

for himself. Now, of course, he could have nothing of that sort for a long, long time, if ever.

They had tickets for a theatre that evening. Between acts, the orchestra played Yankee Doodle, either at the beginning or the ending of their intervals. That Yankee Doodle music thrilled on Ned's nerves, as if they would ridicule America, and he felt like resenting it. Really, the manager thought he was paying compliment to the American colony in Rome by playing the "American National Air," as the Europeans like to call it.

Sight-seeing went on in a day or so. They visited the Pantheon, the Stadium and stood beside the Tarpeian Rock, with its bloody tragedies and annals, thinking of those who had been made to leap from it to their death below.

As usual, they were enraptured with the Southern music and indulged in it abundantly. Many views and souvenirs were sent to Rene at Dresden.

They returned some calls, due to some American acquaintances in the city. The Pope they had only seen once, but his pale, thin face would always remain in their memories, because of its gentleness of expression and evident bodily suffering.

Some Florentine stone mosaics had been made for them. Etruscan Silver Filagree pieces of jewelry, too, were securely put away to be carried home.

It was the fifteenth of April. They would start on their journey away from Rome on the



sixteenth. An attaché of the Embassy whom Ned had met, called upon them. He seemed to be very grave, they all thought, and very soon revealed the reason therefor by beginning.

"Have you heard anything this morning from America?"

"No," answered Ned. "Is there anything new—anything since the surrender?"

"O, yes, indeed. They have received bad news at the Embassy. You have not heard that the President has been assassinated?"

"The President assassinated!" the whole four exclaimed at once.

"Mr. Lincoln was shot last night by John Wilkes Booth at Ford's theater. He is dead! The whole country is stricken dumb. The South will be blamed with it, I fear, and will have to suffer for this wretched, misguided actor's deed, who imagined himself performing the act of a patriot!"

"Yes, it will go hard with the South from now on. It is fortunate she had surrendered. But the North will avenge this in the terms of reconstruction. Well, what a misfortune certainly! Why—what did any one think could be gained by assassinating the President?" so speculated Ned, utterly bewildered by the enormity of yet another act in the dark list of horrors of the last four years.

Bowing solemnly, the young man from the Embassy backed himself out of Major Liscomb's rooms.

The Major was walking up and down the

length of the two rooms, very much agitated. He paused, and said rather coldly: "That is no worse than starving men to death in Andersonville prison, is it, Ned?"

In a minute Ned was on his metal, and flushing angrily, retorted:

"Father, the Southern people had nothing to do with this assassination—nothing at all! It was done by a mad man. You've heard it. Don't say things you may regret. Don't."

"No, my son. I will not, but I hoped all atrocities and brutalities were over, and I am wholly knocked out by this dreadful deed! God, have mercy on us! God, help us!"

They were all weeping now. There was deep humiliation and sorrow in their hearts. Certainly no Northern group was at this moment more grieved than this family of the South, though far from the scene. Indeed they feared it might renew the dark war they had just lived through.

"The struggle is not over, Ned. It will never be over, I fear!" and the old man swept bitterly again.

The little English paper was delivered that afternoon, and it teemed with telegraphic and cable news, which they eagerly read and re-read.

"America in deep mourning. Not a house in the North but is in deepest sorrow and is draped with emblems of sorrow. Women have donned black so far as they can, if only to wear bows of black crape at the throat, or tied upon the arm. All pictures of the dead President are wreathed

in crape. The people speak in whispers. Such quiet and solemnity has never fallen over a whole nation. Officers are on the track of the assassin. He cannot escape them!"

They did not leave Rome on the fifteenth, nor on the sixteenth. They were stupefied by this last act, and remained, mourning, without comfort and in solitude, only for a drive on the next day outside the city. They did not wish the public to look upon them; they felt disgraced and degraded!

The news from home was always impatiently awaited and eagerly read by the family at the Hotel de Milan. The moves and plans of the new President were jealously watched, though he was himself a Southerner, and would understand what the South would want in the reconstruction.

Annie Miller wrote from Leipsic to Rene at Dresden, and she repeated it to the rest of the family in Rome, that her Yankee Lieutenant and affianced lover was urging her to return to America. He would soon be mustered out of service, his time of enlistment being nearly over, he wished to be married very soon.

Rene had also much to write about the shock and consternation among the Americans in Dresden, when the announcement of the assassination reached them. It was at the end of a delightful musical entertainment, when an American had proclaimed the awful tidings before the drop curtain of the stage.

Rene did not at all approve this pending mar-

riage of Annie Miller to the Yankee Lieutenant, Joseph Wood, of the State of New York.

As Ned's wife heard the name read out by Major Liscomb, she excitedly cried out—"Why that is my cousin, Lieutenant Joseph Wood!"

## XIII.

## LAST SAD RITES—SCULPTURE.

Rene also wrote in such an animated manner about her sketching tours with the girls of the colony; that her family began to believe she was forgetting the hateful episode that had wrenched from her life all the joyful buoyancy of youth. The letter ended, Ned asked:

"O, Alice, do you really believe that Second Lieutenant Joseph Wood is brother to your cousin, Sergeant Henry Wood?"

"I certainly do, though I never heard her mention the name. I only heard her say 'my Yankee Lieutenant' in speaking of him. I paid little attention to the affair, believing it only a flirtation; a girl in love with a uniform."

Ned could not drop the subject. This Second Lieutenant had interested him, because he might be a brother to Henry Wood, and he was thinking again of that battlefield, whereon he had so nearly given up his life, whereon he had parted with most of his youth's intensity. He remembered the boy's great dark eyes, almost starting from their sockets, and wondered if he was killed that day at Chickamauga Creek. He was very thoughtful a moment, and asked:

Alice, can't you write to Annie Miller and find



out if her Second Lieutenant, Joseph Wood, had a brother Henry, a Sergeant in an infantry regiment, and who was in the battle at Chickamauga Creek?"

"Certainly, certainly, I will do that at once, before she leaves Leipsic. Well, what a curious coincidence indeed, if we should find ourselves so mixed up in our relationship with Northern soldiers!"

Alice continued conversation.

"When we return to America, we will visit mother, who lives with these warlike relatives of mine, and you can see what sort of people live North. I don't know them myself."

"I lived North a year at college, just before the war. I did not like the people. They were always talking about slavery. They knew I was a Southerner, and I think they did it for nasty impudence to me!"

The long days before Mr. Lincoln's funeral were days of retrospection for some sections undoubtedly. While the funeral service was in progress in Washington, a memorial service was being conducted in most towns of the country north of Mason and Dixon's line. Sincere grief and mourning showed in the great crowds of people congregated everywhere on the railroad route of the journey west to Springfield, Illinois, the home of the grand old martyr. It was a most solemn pageant all the way, and all the honor that could be was shown his memory by hearts sobbing with anguish!

How he had borne ridicule, sarcasm, insult, mockery and death for his loved country! How

he had struggled to restore his erring brother to all rights in the United States Government. He had not in his character any hate for his critics. He only meant to do his duty to his beloved country in the way God should direct him. His opponents in the South soon understood that, when they had humiliating conditions put upon them by misrule and mistakes of those who followed in governing the South, that aroused them to utter madness, and they finally got things into shape by bloody, high-handed resolution and revolution in their own States. But there was a dark and long comedy of errors enacted, before the wrecked government could be once more restored to tranquility—to perfect brotherhood, perhaps never could be!

The Liscombs had very few glimpses of the royal family before leaving Rome. They visited Naples, Sorrento, Pompeii, and returned to Rome for one more day. This was the time they really saw the king to any advantage, and that was but a hasty sight of him. The orange and lemon groves they passed, on this trip, reminded them of their own beautiful fields of tobacco and cotton and corn. They longed for the shade of their fine oaks.

Their plantation lay in the least ruined district of the South. Cousin Jonas Wilson had acted as agent for them in their absence. At one time he had feared that the land might be confiscated under a short lived proclamation that took in the property of any one "harboring a rebel," but, by some feat of cleverness of Mr. Jonas or some

oversight of magistrate he had kept the land intact for the owners.

Letters and papers were found at Rome when they returned. They gleaned from them that the assassin of the President had been shot, and that everybody was alert to know how the Vice-President, now come into the higher office, would direct affairs, but he walked under a cloud from the hour of his taking the oath of office till the end of it.

Later on, the South was put under Military Rule, until affairs could be shaped up from the turmoil and confusion that had overwhelmed them.

Going from Rome again, the family stopped at Naples for a few days. They were in sight yet of Vesuvius, but did not care to join the excursion to the crater. They went into churches, museums and palace. One beautiful day an excursion was made over the waters of the bay past the Blue Grotto to Capri. The younger of them rode about the romantic hills of the place upon the backs of large mules, which were led by their guides.

Thence they went on to Pisa; were in the Cathedral, the Baptistry, and the younger ones climbed the steps of the leaning tower; made leaning perhaps by a spring of water that had burst from under it. Most of the old and famous sculptors were there represented by statues about the tower. Here they bought a beautiful Parian marble tower to send Annie Miller, and also of the Cathedral and Baptistry, as wedding gift. They saw the swinging lamp that sug-

gested to Galileo his great discovery of the Pendulum, from a slight and constant movement of it.

Returning, they passed a famous shrine, containing one of the noted Madonnas; stopped for a few minutes to see this "The Madonna of the Thorn."

Resting a few days, they traveled on to Milan, where they were soon engaged in visiting churches, parks and the Grand Passage called Galleria Vittorio Emanuele. The beautiful marble Gothic church or cathedral begun in 1386 is a delicate and wonderful work, and has hundreds of statues about its imposing structure. Its numerous spires glitter like snow in the sun, and one hears there the most impressive music, and its answering responses echoing from capital to capital of its lofty columns.

They called upon an American acquaintance who was studying at the Conservatory of Music, and heard her play, by invitation, at a private musicale.

They visited the principal park and cemetery of Milan. Visited the great opera house one afternoon. No important musical or theatrical event was due during the few days they remained in the beautiful city; only open air concerts.

They heard more Italian spoken here than they had heard elsewhere, and revelled in its long, musical drawl on the latter part of words. Alice had an ear for languages, as Ned had for music, and was always wishing she could have studied several, and especially Italian.

Mrs. Liscomb said one day when she heard her enthuse over Italian:

"I studied French and German a while at school; know English fairly, but was in a situation once, in the Northwest, where I thought I would give the whole accomplishment for a knowledge of an Indian language that my temporary servant spoke; and it is always so. One never knows enough."

Alice said: "I never knew that you all had lived in the Northwest."

"My family did not. I went West to visit a niece and to improve my health, for I had been ill. While I was there, this relative was seized with a serious illness. Her servant left her. They always leave one, if it is house-cleaning time of the year, or if there is sickness in the family, you know. Well, I hired an Indian woman to do the things I could not. That is the time I desired so ardently to know her language."

Nancy and I got on very well. When she did not want to do certain things she simply vanished till next day, so there was no contention. It may be she said a lot of naughty things as she trotted along to her tepee in the pines over the river. I thought same.

They all laughed and Alice asked if that Indian language was harsh and guttural. The mother-in-law did not know; she had not heard much of it. She said, though, in pursuing the subject of the West still further:

"That is a journey I want you and Ned to make some time. Only the scenery of Austria



and the Alps can compare with our Northwest. The Alps are more awful, of course."

The tourists' next stop was at Bellagio, where the two arms, Lecco and Como, meet. Lake Como is considered the most beautiful of the Italian group. It is thirty miles long, and at its greatest width is three miles wide.

Its shores are studded with charming villas and villages with a background of forests and mountains. At the hotel they met English tourists and some American "globe trotters," as the English term extensive travelers. They also say "Trippers."

A string band rendered lovely music on the piazza, in their enchanting, impassioned manner. Passing up and down before the hotel were gaily illuminated boats, thronged with jolly people, making an evening to be remembered.

Here they remained some days, boating sometimes during the morning. On one of these excursions they stopped at a beautiful villa, with lovely grounds to view Canova's Cupid and Psyche. This piece of sculpture is considered the sculptor's masterpiece, and is indescribable.

Reviving a little from the surprise that they experienced in seeing this work, the eyes fall upon another work of high art appropriately near by. After appreciating the first, if one can come down to earth and understand this marble, Magdalene, one sees a kneeling figure with lowered head, and empty hands dropped in an attitude of utter despair at her sides, while her eyes gaze most regretfully upon the Skeleton of the Past—a skull on the ground near by.

Commenting upon what they had seen that morning, the tourists felt themselves indeed too incompetent to express what they felt.

They were really too provincial in education and experiences to know what they thought of this art in marble, that expressed sublimity and humility in a way that word painting, in poetry or prose, could only degrade.

They had already bought a small duplicate of Cupid and Psyche in a studio, or the salesrooms rather, of a noted sculptor in Rome. It was to be sent along with the Leaning Tower, Church and Baptistry of Pisa, to Annie Miller, as wedding gifts from the Liscombs. Annie could not make a tour of the South of Europe, since she had chosen marriage.

Rather reluctantly the family left Bellagio, to continue their travels towards Lugano. There they stopped at another hotel overlooking the waters of a lake, and remained one day in the delightful hostelry. Then they passed on through most charming places, till they entered the St. Gothard Tunnel, nine and over a quarter miles long, which is one and a half miles longer than the Mont Cenis Tunnel.

The St. Gothard is nearly one thousand feet below Andermatt, and five to six thousand five hundred feet below the peaks of the St. Gothard. Louis Faure of Geneva was the contractor, but died before it was completed.

The sensations were grewsome, as they slowly rode through this dark, underground road!

The ravishing beauties of Italy and its sensuous music were now over, and the rugged land-

scapes of the Alps and Switzerland were taking their places. Switzerland indeed! which is sometimes German, and again quite French, and South, very Italian. Back in the interior alone is the country Swiss, speaking its own language.

By the mountain railway, they ascended to the summit of the Righi. Looking from the car window one has the sensation of being suspended in midair over a boundless and bottomless space. Some people cannot look out at all. At the hotel here, they passed one chilly night to see the sunrise over the three hundred miles scenery of the surrounding view.

From the Righi, the party descended to Vitznan, where they took a steamer for Lucerne, amid the most magnificent scenery of Switzerland, and sailed over Lake Lucerne. At a comfortable hotel here they rested a few days, meantime visiting the Arsenal, the quaint old bridges, to see their curious frescoes; saw the old Roman watch tower. One day at sunset they sat in the Cathedral to hear the sublime music always rendered at this hour, when dreamy twilight approaches.

They stood long before Thornwaldsen's Lion, the sad monument to the memory of the fine Swiss Guards who died defending the palace of the Tuileries at Paris, a hundred years before.

Nothing could have been more appropriate than this great lion, pierced through by a spear, as a commemoration of the fine, strong men who died that day. Small duplicates in stone and in marble were sold. The Liscombs, of course, took one, carved out of wood. This monument was

chiselled on the face of the natural walls of a grotto, and the names of the fallen heroes were all cut below. Photographs of it are sold everywhere.

In a place near by was the model in marble, made from the clay one Thorwaldsen had modeled.

The Glacier Gardens were visited, and again the Cathedral. Resting, receiving and answering letters occupied a part of the time here, before they took the boat to Alpnacht; thence over the Brunig Pass to Interlaken.

This delightful resort, between the two lakes, and surrounded by mountains, always has its hotels and pensions filled with travelers from many parts of the world in summer. It might be termed the Saratoga of Switzerland, only for its quiet.

A few days here, including a Sunday, the most quiet one ever experienced, and the Liscombs felt greatly rested and refreshed. The shops were filled with Swiss wood carvings and poetic souvenirs of the mountains. Photographs and Eidelweiss were easily carried, so these made up the principal purchases, aside from very necessary toilet articles.

Walks were taken to picturesque points on the Lakes.

## XIV.

## THE AMERICAN STUDENTS.

Rene desired to remain in Dresden as long as possible. The summer had been passed in sight-seeing, and in sketching tours, and excursions in Germany, with her class.

She had visited an International Exposition of Oil Paintings, at which the American representation caused her chagrin, because of the pitifully few paintings sent by American pupils from Paris and London, and these did not represent the best of her country's art. She was astonished that they had been accepted at all, unless it was to put the nation into ridicule before more advanced countries.

Rene had indeed been busy. She had taken lessons in voice culture; lessons in painting and lessons in German, both in grammar and in reading; conversation was always at hand, at two meals a day, in the pension where she lived with the girl friends.

Musical entertainments had been lavishly indulged in, for their merits in entertaining and their usefulness to the students. Rene found it better for her to be always occupied; in fact, she liked to be hurried every moment, so that she could have no time at all to reflect—to be stu-



pidly thinking—thinking over a sickening past. She did not grieve and sorrow so much now. A healthy hate was not hurtful, and was fast stealing into her sorely wounded soul. Pride was taking the place of the old love in her heart, and bracing it up, she hoped, to final forgetfulness of the original sting and humiliating disappointment.

In a short time her parents would expect her to meet them in Paris. As most of the others of the group would be returning home in a few weeks or months, she was reconciled to the change. It was because the war had ended and families of the South began to look up the strayed ones, to unite in making up, once more, the broken home. In fact, the most of them were badly pressed for means.

The students expected to find places to teach whatever each one had best fitted herself for. Rene hurried to accomplish certain tasks she had tyrannically set out for herself before she should go out of reach of teachers she so much liked.

It was a little strange, that of all the jolly quintet of girls, Rene had attracted most particularly the attention of an employe of a banking concern in the city. He had met her at musicales and at the "Cercles" at Frau Professor Temple's, whenever any gentlemen at all were admitted, being a relative of the Professor.

At these delightful club evenings, each pupil might bring one or two of her acquaintances to hear a short lecture or conversation in English, French or German, as occasion had appointed. The young relative was learning English.

After the lecture there was a little social enjoyment of an ice, some music and a short dance. The young man was rather sentimental, and, perhaps, in love, in a temperate degree, but he had the usual European desire to attach himself to a "rich American" female if he could manage it; and the way a respectable young or other German usually did manage it, was by the assistance of an elderly feminine friend, if he had one.

Frau Professor gradually let Rene understand the preference her relative had expressed for her. Not being directly discouraged, the amiable elderly teacher proposed marriage between Rene and the grave young banker.

Rene was quite startled, somewhat like a really married woman might have been at a declaration of love from some friend of her husband's; for she had scrupulously repelled any advance of gentlemen as faithfully as if she had indeed been wedded to Budd Stone.

Confused and agitated, she gasped out: '

"Frau Professor Tempel, *ich bin schon verlobt; mit einem Americaner!*"

She could not have said it in English, so she had told the teacher in German. It did not seem so bold. "I am already betrothed to an American."

Then also in German, Frau Professor exclaimed with some emotion,

"*Mein Gott; Fraulein Liscomb, ich bedaure es sehr! Mein Nefte ist in sie so sehr verliebt!*"

Luckily the entrance of an expected pupil put an end to the disagreeable situation. Rene was

considerate enough to keep the matter a secret from the other careless, joyous four friends.

The very hospitable Frau Professor regretted her failure in securing the "rich American," for the young employe of the bank, for more than one reason. If she had got the girl for his wife, she would have found added to her deposits at that bank several hundred marks more than her hard worked mind had remembered placing there. She knew many cases of this sort. One lady in Berlin, whom she very well knew, had a beautiful, rich black silk dress sent her from a happy lad she had managed to make happier. Then she could have told you the very number and street of an aristocratic Pension from which Count So and So had won his rich American wife; and to whom he had sent an honorarium, and that was to this highly honored boarding house mistress; of many hundred marks so soon as he got his aspiring American wife's money into his possession.

The American girl is undoubtedly the cleverest, the sprightliest, the prettiest, generally speaking, of all the women of the world, but very many are tricked into marriage for the fortune they can furnish, and seldom, for anything else of all their glorious graces and bewitching charms.

! Rene had none of that blind worshipful longing to become a countess or baroness, she had heard so much speculative conversation about, nor yet the desire to turn over her bank account to the cashier of some foreign concern at present.

The relative of Frau and Herr Professor Tempel joined some others on an excursion upon the Rhine, politely sending picture postals to each of the five students during his tour. After his return, he was usually too much occupied to pursue his English studies with "Liebe Tante" for some time, so Rene was spared the pain of meeting him again face to face. The others of the industrious quintet missed him.

After some private rehearsals the girls had learned to make the awkward curtsy that is done always before European Royalty, without tumbling into a humiliating heap. They had seen a subject of his Majesty, the Emperor, fall when making her curtsy to him as his carriage passed her on a bridge. They really never intended to curtsy in public, but found a lot of fun in imitating this greeting.

That is what they said, but Rene declared that they all curtsied fine one day in Berlin when the Emperor passed them.

Be that as it may, they curtsied often to each other to keep in practice. They often found themselves "sober enough," as they termed their hours of reflection, to deeply regret their future and early separation.

These students had gone, occasionally, to copy in the galleries, or to study coloring, or to study technique, according to the particular need the teacher had discovered in them. This time they had brought finished pictures to compare with the originals, or as one girl put it, "to daub out their last corrections, and replace them with worse faults."

They reviewed their many favorites, taking a long, lingering good-bye of them, for they should see no more of them soon. They probably saw certain uncanny ones that they had generally passed hurriedly by, with more interest and charity, than they would have acknowledged to one another.

The next shopping place of the Liscombs was at Geneva, beautifully situated at the foot of Lake Lehman, or the Lake of Geneva; the largest and one of the most picturesque of the Swiss lakes. It lies in the midst of the grandest Alpine scenery, with the loftiest peak of all, Mont Blanc, in plain view.

It is said that of the fifty thousand inhabitants there are two hundred millionaires, and it is often called the city of millionaires. Calvin preached and lived here. For twenty-eight years he preached in its old cathedral. This is the first place our tourists visited. The next place was the Russian Church with its round domes. They went into the Public Library, founded by Bonnivard, to the Universities, Gardens or Parks, to Rossian's Park and Garden, to the City Hall. Saw the National Monument and the Meeting of Waters. Rested a few days, then proceeded through the Mont Blanc region for fifty miles by carriage, resting sometimes for a few hours; once stopping over night, after they had just passed through the deep grass of an English walnut grove. It was about the loneliest spot they had ever passed through. One of their drivers wore ear rings, which added to the general foreign atmosphere and odd picturesqueness



## IRENE LISCOMB

of the surroundings. The wonderfully made mountain roads throughout Europe, and these likewise, were greatly admired.

They found themselves soon afterwards at Chamouni. Now they are still nearer Mont Blanc, this Monarch of the Alps, in whose vicinity are large ice cataracts. They rode mules over the magnificent mountain roads to the Mer de Glace. Then on foot, with guides, crossed this sea of ice, well gravelled over by the ages to the Mauvais Pas.

Once they had crossed the deep cracks or crevasses of the sea of ice, and had got upon the Mauvais Pas, there was no turning back, and to look down was threatening death. It was one of the most novel and the most dangerous of all their lifetime experiences. This path is less than five inches wide, on the almost straight wall of rock, with steps slanting, and hardly deep enough for the toe of one's shoe to catch on. Only for a rod of iron along and close to this rock wall, no human could get over it. If one of the loops, which holds it to place, should be pulled out, it is rather certain that the victim on the path would be dashed to death below upon the Mer de Glace.

It was hard for the elderly couple to believe they had ventured to risk their lives in making the trip, when they got to the hotel and talked it over. The excitement of the thrilling experience was with them for days, and they said they would never say again "Fools!" as they often had when reading of some death in Alpine adventures, for they now understood the luring fascination.

Not long afterwards, however, their carriages were creeping along through the Vale of Chamouni, and in the valley of the Rhone, by the Tête Noir Pass. The horses were breathing so hard that they all got out of the diligence, and tried to walk sometimes. It was not for long distances at all. They would be so short of breath themselves that they were glad to get back into the wagon, and the horses were given a few minutes breathing time, the great brake of the wagon sufficing to hold it still on the steep, but fine road.

They were in sight of several glaciers at the highest point, which is 6,595 feet high. A couple of days to rest again was decided upon when they arrived at Martigny. Here they wrote letters home which they would mail at some less remote point.

As they traveled on to Lausanne, they stopped over to visit the historic Castle of Chillon, which Byron made still more famous by his poem. Before entering the building even, they were looking up the "Three Dents," the three points of the mountains overlooking it, mentioned by the poet as he begins, "O, say, have you seen them?"

From the lower dungeon they looked out of the narrow slit in the very thick wall upon "the isle of the three trees" that the eyes of the great prisoner Bonnivard had so often looked upon. Certainly not the same trees. They were too young, but the same number, and the same isle, perhaps, to keep pace with the poem of the erratic English poet.

The base of the stone column to which he was

chained showed the unmistakable wear of his fetters as the restless revolutionist moved back and forth around it. An immense open fireplace in one of the apartments had probably furnished whatever of warmth he ever had in the cold, damp place. The Castle has its foundation on this side, deep down in the water.

They were not shown the oubliette. It was on Sunday that the tourists arrived in Lausanne; went into a Catholic Church in the morning, and toured about the parks in the afternoon. Then, in the evening of the restful, quiet and exquisitely mild autumn day, they started on towards Paris, the city of their many exaggerated dreams: the city of moods and remarkable phases; of tragedies and pleasures.

The Liscombs settled in a very centrally located hotel, the Dominici, until they might find a family pension where they could live for some weeks. Letters awaited them; one not altogether agreeable throughout. It was from Annie Miller. She was very happily married to Second Lieutenant Joseph Wood.

"Yes, he had a brother, Sergeant Henry Wood. He was fighting with his Volunteer Infantry Regiment, and was killed at Chickamauga Creek. She and Joseph would tour New York City, and then would start for the Northwest. She was very enthusiastic about young people going West, believing Joseph would soon find good luck, backing up his fine plans for the future. But let me tell you about the dear ruined Southland. Negroes are now voting there. Some of them hold offices in the county. Think

of asking a nigger for your mail at the post office and of giving them the sidewalk you've always expected them to give you in passing! They are dressed up as policemen, arresting even white people! Carpet baggers and niggers are trying to rule down there. Think of our once proud South! Shooting is as common as it was when we all deserted it. You all will not want to come home yet. Don't do it, I beg you."

"Nonsense!" said Ned. "We will rule our States ourselves! The North has yet to learn that ours is no nigger government."

## XV.

## THE FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT.

"Ah, Ned, there will be trouble for a long time! Curse the luck that brought about the war!" said Major Liscomb.

"The old gentleman is threatened with one of his younger-day fits of wrath," said his wife, in an undertone to the daughter-in-law.

"And I don't intend to go home yet!" he added, his face very red.

"If I should go home now, I'm sure I should join that 'shot gun corps' the papers are telling about being at all the voting precincts. I wanted to go into politics, but from such a shameful mess of carpetbaggers and niggers, I say 'Good Lord, deliver me!' We will not go home this fall!" said Ned. "The Fourteenth Amendment! No wonder so many of the States can't get back in the Union! I admire them for not ratifying that insulting thing to the South!"

"But, son, they will ratify it. They cannot put the negro back into slavery, and since he must have equality, in most things before the law, why—why—that amendment is about the best they can do. Can't you see it that way? They must saddle citizenship on him and prepare him for his future. Don't you see?"



"See it? Well, I'll be hanged if I shall ever see it that way! Never mind! In a little while, the South will come out of her benumbed sleep, and through a bit of manouvering, she will, in her State's legislation, so hamper this new citizen that an almighty few will vote many times. Do you take the hint? Do you see? And I cannot always be forbidden a vote, because I bore arms against the U. S. Government. Some of the whites now debarred this privilege that the nigger has been given, will devise better than the North can foresee, and get the South under their own control. Can't you see?" asked Ned.

"I see, yes, I see, and think all things will come out right in the long run, but the race will be a hot one!"

Ned arose and went from the room into the street for a walk. He generally got into a passion when discussing these things.

Ned's walk had quieted his temper, and when he met his wife again he did not allude to anything that had passed between him and his father.

"Well, Alice dear, it is very clear that Henry Wood was the boy whose acquaintance I made that day on the field at Chickamauga Creek.

"If he had a lucid thought before he gave up his soul, I believe it was a vision of me, the soldier he had just seen dying from the gunshot he had just dealt him!"

"O, Ned! how strange that you could speculate on what a dying soldier thought! It is said that most all of them never know they have been

hit at all, and I hope Cousin Henry did not, nor had to suffer long."

"Yes, it is said that in the excitement of battle the fatally wounded are unconscious or delirious."

"Well, if it is true, it is a fortunate condition. I had such a tremendous fear of being run over as I fell. I think I was unconscious till the boy raised my head to let me drink out of the canteen. Then I looked at him and saw he was the same person that had shot me."

"Let us forget it and forgive it!"

"I've nothing to forgive. It was a fair fight, and really dying was about the easiest side of it. Remember how I have suffered, and how much trouble I have caused all my relatives, and how very much money it has cost my father! Alice, I will never vex him again. He is just as honest in his views of right and wrong as I am. He did not want a war, and that is just about all he ever did do or say against it. It is a pity any of us ever wanted it. I see it now. But who could see it when full of wrath and ambition? I've partly paid for my folly and the consequences will pursue me always. I very much aspired to a high place in politics, which I shall have to give up for a business career."

"Father, don't you need me to assist you in making up plans for the plantation house? Cousin Jonas Wilson writes that everything goes so slow in building that it is well to begin in time to contract for the material, and wants to know when you'll be home to superintend the building."

"Yes, indeed. I shall be glad of your opinions and plan, for you and Alice are to be members of our household whenever and however you may desire. We only wish it might be for all time, but make it for long, or for any time that suits you; your rooms will always be your rooms."

"Rene writes as if she will be satisfied to live there so long as we live. That is a great comfort to us. My amiable child, Rene."

"Well, I fancy it will be dull for her since this vast touring she has done, but she can invite guests very often—she can come to Alice and me whenever she needs a change. We shall live in New York sometimes, and go very often to places abroad for a short time, as I am trying to get a position with a cotton company since I cannot cut any figure in politics. The North will put Northern men into every place worth a fiddlestring, rather than give an 'ex-rebel' any place, you may be sure."

"Ned, you have been looking into affairs further than I had suspected. Let me compliment you for your business head."

"I shall be at home with you a great deal and my wife will be with Rene very much."

"I do hope we can do all we expect, but don't let anybody dig the foundation out till we get there. I should not be surprised if all that silverware and bric-a-brac might have been saved by all the débris that happened to tumble exactly into the little wine cellar where we had stored it, and covered so handsomely with Mammy

Nance's ashes and scrap heap. Do you hear me, father?" said Mrs. Liscomb.

"How did you happen to be thinking of that? I was thinking of that very thing to-night," said Major Liscomb.

"I have more news for you," said Ned. "Cousin Jonas wrote me weeks ago, and I forgot to tell you that the incendiary gang carried out many of the pictures and furniture from the house, 'toted' them to old Ben's cabin, intending to get them, but the army soldiers ran them out of the country before they came back for them. They have been locked up there ever since, and Cousin Jonas built plank screens before the windows and doors, so that he believes you've already some things to put into a couple of rooms of the new house."

"God bless the man! A friend in need is a friend indeed! Wife, let's take him some of our later collections!"

Rene arrived much improved in body and mind, as one could see at a glance. Her blond beauty was at its perfection. They had so much to tell one another that would hardly keep till to-morrow, that it was late when they slept.

The morning was devoted entirely to exchange of experiences, only for a walk and smoke that the father and son indulged in at noonday. It was not late news to Rene that Annie Miller was married; for before the wedding Annie's mother had herself written Rene begging her to write, and entreat Annie not to marry Lieutenant Wood, saying:

"My daughter must not marry the Lieutenant.

When he and a squad of his men guarded our house that time before the mob had burned your father's place, I noticed that he was too fond of the drinks that Annie's father served the boys. One of them confessed to me that his superior, Joseph, loved strong drink far too well."

"I pray you, dear Miss Rene, use your influence with her. I thought it was all over between them when we put ourselves still deeper in debt to send her away. Alas, it was not!"

"Well, could you influence her?"

"No, you see they were on the eve of marriage, and she stubbornly went through with it. Then her mother and father wrote her that they hoped never to see or hear from her again!"

"Oh, surely, surely, Rene, do you believe it?" asked both of the other women.

"Believe it? Annie sent me the letter, so I read it, and it is just as I've told you. Furthermore, she wrote:

"You'll pay high for this foolhardiness, but I don't want to hear anything of it! Keep your drunken Yankee to yourself!"

"That was too cruel! How could a mother turn against a daughter like that! They'll make up, however," said Mrs. Liscomb. "Of course they'll make up."

"I doubt it," said Rene, "for Annie wrote me:

"I shall never cross her path—never! You know how stubborn Annie is. So she'll bear her misfortunes silently. I know her well. She'll die rather than complain! She thinks he will love her too well to throw himself away for



drink. He has assured her that over and over again."

"God, help her! 'Once a drunkard, always a drunkard,' is a very true saying. What it is in a man's nature, that once drink gets the best of him, he is forever lost, I cannot understand, but I tell you, it is true," said Mrs. Liscomb.

"One is hopelessly blind if she has not seen this. It is the stupid egotism of youth that leads a girl to believe she is to be her lover's saviour. I know of nothing so miserable in the whole course of life as this wretched thing, drunkenness!" continued the elderly woman.

"Why drink poisons and paralyze the victim's faculties. He can't work; he becomes a liar; other characteristics develop. His character loses whatever of honesty, or virtue, or firmness it ever had. Generally, he had none to begin with. He is then only a heart-broken thing; helplessly doing and regretting—doing and regretting, till he would commit suicide if he only had a will strong enough, and wasn't a coward; too miserable to die."

"O, mother, that is a fine temperance lecture!" both women agreed. "Poor Annie!" said all.

Our three ladies and the two gentlemen tourists, guests of the curious, little, squat hotel, arrayed themselves for a walk one delightfully cool morning. Leaving the hotel, they looked into the shops and passed the Colonne Vendome near by, meaning to do some sight-seeing in the vicinity, afoot.

They were chatting and commenting as they went along, on the childish rage that had one

time prompted some communists to destroy this wonderful and immense column. They had read how these had toiled, planned, worked to upset and batter to pieces the monument with clubs and axes, with great ropes; they had already managed to defame it and mar its surface. They did slightly tilt it also from its strong foundation. Why they did not finish the demolition no one remembered to have heard, or having heard, had forgotten.

Thence they passed into the Rue des Italiens, and viewed restaurants, shops and show places, now in the ugly stage of getting ready for the later day's crowds and all night's carousals that besiege this fashionable rendezvous of representatives from all nations of the earth, and other places, perhaps, not in Paris alone.

Then to the beautiful, magnificent opera house with its marble stairway and its onyx railing thereto. By a little inquiry and a "pourbois," they were permitted a view of these interior ornaments of the famous building while not occupied.

It was an unusual hour, but certainly a most favorable one in which to get a good look at the great interior, with its several galleries and vast opera boxes; the stage and the boxes of the nobility, above all; for the nobility is ever the prominent and dominant of all things European, whether the momentary situation be Republican or Monarchic, Catholic or Evangelic. Further along, as they went from the Place de l'Opera, they read the words, Charité, Eealité, Fraternité, chiseled on a stone building; and going over to

the Rue de Rivoli, they passed the Tuileries Gardens; saw the little bit of wall that is still preserved of the Palais des Tuileries. This place was once a tile yard, hence the title. The old royal palace was long since destroyed.

All the afternoon they lounged and rested. Furnished with addresses, their acquaintances had given them from time to time, they set out one day to find quarters for the winter months. All the most centrally located seemed to be in that part of the city in which they now lived; being noisy and expensive, then then examined others.

Finally they found comfortably and genteelly appearing rooms near the Arch de Triomphe. Took a dinner there at eight o'clock and decided to live there the short three months before they might leave for London, where they would stop.

Visiting the exquisite shops in the Palais Royal next morning, they found a dainty, beautiful restaurant, where they came next day at noon for a déjeuner, or breakfast.

This was perhaps the last palace built for Royalty, who being financially pressed, made all the first floor of the palace into superior shops. These places rented for a goodly sum, and, of course, the Americans paid a surprising price for what they ate, concluding that it was worth something to know one had breakfasted in a really royal palace. "The royalty was not at home that morning," Rene said, in telling of the experiences, so they moved to their new quarters in a day or so, having exhausted sight-seeing in their first location. The three great dry

goods houses were visited and patronized before they left; the central post office and another restaurant or so.

Hereafter they would ride in a great omnibus, drawn by horses harnessed up three abreast, and on the ascent or grade in the Rue des Champs Elysee, another one would be added. The electric car and more rapid later transit was not yet known to Paris. There were some narrow tramways whose motor was donkeys. So small were these that one thought of them as "children's Pretend cars." At first there was no English spoken at their table and they were compelled to use their fund of American-learned French, which, under present manipulation, pronunciation and articulation had become a rather marvelous language of signs and gestures, but it answered most occasions and their particular needs.

## XVI.

## PARIS—THE MORGUE.

Ned christened this wonderful language he and his family were practicing on their victims, The New Speech for Mutes. The French landlady never nonplussed by unusual situations, declared of her new boarders "Des Americains Charmants!"

Though certainly amused, and sometimes shocked, she was always exceedingly gracious and polite. Her voice was low and melodious, as if no vexation in life had ever been known to her, nor irritation disturbed her gentle or, rather, genteel soul. It was a new sensation; quite a new experience for the new boarders, in fact.

The ong pronunciation of on later by some other tourists at her table seemed but a natural if not a beautiful manifestation of their earnest and marvelous wish to grasp her own dainty language, so she was a popular landlady, and always had a large patronage. It did not much matter if the mutton was underdone, or that the chicken had been dead too long, her suavity failed not, and that was much to get at any boarding house! Cheerfulness being invaluable!

She would be very happy indeed to accompany the Americans to the Cemetery Père la



Chaise, if it was their pleasure to visit this renowned domicile of the blessed dead; and it was their pleasure. So with the landlady as guide, who wished to carry flowers, which they bought, to place upon her late husband's tomb, they visited Père la Chaise, up in the rocks, overlooking the newer Paris. From this point the communists or Rebels, or whatever the mob was, bombarded the city one time, well sheltered themselves by the tomb stones and monuments. That was long before the large crematory palace had been thought of. This building of later years, being a merciful provision for the poor of Paris particularly, who could hardly afford a grave for their dead, unless it were a hired one for a limited time.

Not far from the Crematory palace was the grave of Rachel, the actress, born of Jewish parents in New Orleans, U. S. A. The Liscombs found other graves of Americans. That of Talma, the actor, was not far away. Talma, who had taught deportment often to the great Napoleon, and planned his wardrobe for him!

The showy tombs of some Orientals were conspicuous in other places; those who had died while Ambassadors to France, perhaps. Many little and larger shrines were scattered about, wherein were bodies, one on top of another, from deep down in the rocky vaults to near the top. Bead wreaths, imitating flowers, were conspicuous everywhere. The older ones were ugly, from the rust of the wire on the light colored beads. Within these small, houselike shrines sometimes was seen a metal chair, where the vis-

itor might sit, while visiting his dead, after he had unlocked the door of the shrine, and ventilated it a while.

This cemetery was a piece of rocky hills given by the priest, Père la Chaise, to Paris, long years before.

They found the tomb of Abelard and Heloise, and noted the many tokens left there by present day lovers, who hoped sometime to be buried together as these now were. She, the abbess of a convent; he the teacher of a new cult and a monk in a monastery, not far from her; but, for different reasons, never united in life. Indeed they were for years buried in different graves. She was buried in the grounds of her convent till after he died.

They peeped into the cradle of the crematory wherein the dead could be turned into ashes in an incredibly short time; and were shown small boxes of red pottery about six or eight inches square and numbered, in which the precious ashes could be placed for burial in the cemetery, or for shipment to friends elsewhere. The number of each box was inscribed in ledgers in the stone building at the entrance gate of the grounds, as was also the names of the deceased.

A narrow promontory or ledge of the cemetery had built upon it a representation of Napoleon, at a table in an arbor at Elba. His tomb was not here; but a plain grave, without marble, was railed in by an iron grating, on whose sandstone base was rudely cut "Nye." This is said to be the grave of the General, Marshal Nye, sentenced to be executed one morning at Paris.

A book written in late years in America claims that he escaped the order and came to America, where he died in one of the Southern States some years later.

The gracious landlady conducted the new *pensionnaires* back to her quarters in time for a late dinner. They were thoughtful this evening, talking over what they had seen, and the career of many of the great ones entombed at Père la Chaise, just overlooking the city.

In planning for the next day they promised themselves a visit to the tomb of Napoleon, nearer them.

Reaching the Church and Hotel des Invalides, the party passed into the walled-in court by some of the invalid soldiers housed here. They then went into the immense rotunda, and leaning over a railing above an immense granite lined vault, saw the granite sarcophagus containing the remains of the great Napoleon in the center. They did not descend into the large round vault, as they might have done.

Many emotions stirred within them as they reflected upon the wonderful career of the man, the soldier, the Emperor, whose brilliant life had gone out in exile. They thought of Marie Louise, his wife, of his son, whose palace at Schonbrunn they had lately visited.

After the two last days sight-seeing, they all appeared quiet and thoughtful. The older couple somehow seemed impressed with the insignificance of life, because of the uncertainty of its ending.

Rene looked as if all the time asking "What

does it all matter, anyhow?" And really that was the constant inquiry of her mind, as she saw more, heard more and read more of the career of the mighty of the earth. It was discouraging in one sense; in another, it was a reconciling influence on her character, for she resolved to live out her life uncomplaining; taking it as it came to her, for what did the best of them get, more than she had? She dared not think too closely upon the fast passing event of life.

On Sunday the Liscomb family went to Notre Dame Cathedral and enjoyed the music of High Mass. It is built on the foundation of a former structure of the same sort, as war, fire or mobs made it necessary to rebuild. Statuary of dead sculptors had been ruthlessly demolished, as had been threatened, to the Colonne Vendome by the maddened *Canaille*, in other days; statues which could not be replaced, though the building might.

Although it was Sunday, they went into the morgue near by, and saw three figures with a thin stream of water pouring over each. Two of them were women, a young and an old one. Their clothes were spread out near the owners for recognition, if any relative came. The man was large, grim and did not look like a Frenchman. It is told that three francs had been given to the finder of a body in the Seine at one period of the city's existence, and that people had been hurled from the bridges by murderers for this reward of three francs, so the city had to annul the reward, as it was found positively true that several persons had been murdered that way at night time.

Returning home they talked, as they usually did, of the music of the High Mass at the Cathedral; stood on the bridge by the low coping on its sides, and looking into the water, wondered if either of the three at the morgue had suicided, or had they been murdered?

The day was fine for the season, and the tourists felt rather surfeited with seeing grave and gruesome sights, so they walked over to Parc Monceaux. They lingered long about the miniature lake, sitting about on the seats, talking and talking as usual. Near by was a limited school for English nurses, which are so very much in demand for English speaking sojourners in Paris. Overlooking this park were the houses of some renowned persons already known to travelers.

They went to the post office of the precinct to get postage stamps and cards. Soon after arriving at their pension, a man servant went from door to door on every floor, announcing, after rapping on each door of all the apartments, "*Le dejeuner est servi*," for which the family was glad, as the walk had given them fine appetites for luncheon.

After a couple hours of lounging, reading and resting, the party went to the Pantheon and to the Madeleine Cathedral. A funeral was being conducted at the Madeleine, and the front of the building showed the great doorway, framed in by black draperies, as they would find a private dwelling so draped, while a dead person lies in the house.

The mourners had gone afoot to the church,



while the carriages which would take them on to the cemetery followed them. The Mass for the dead was sonorously sung in great solemnity and impressive simplicity.

At the Pantheon they were shown the temporary resting place of several renowned persons who were afterwards buried elsewhere. Driving then past the Place and Arch du Carrousel, through the Place de la Concorde, they arrived home in time for the seven o'clock dinner. After that was over they were in no manner whatever in need of going out to some amusement, for a famous pianist lodging in the house good-naturedly rendered a beautiful repertoire in Madame's Salon to an appreciative audience.

He liked to play for Madame's guests whenever he could. He was handsome and gracious; therefore very popular, if not positively adored by his lady friends. Just before ten o'clock he took leave of them to appear before the invited guests at a very fashionable house at another side of the city.

The Americans were enjoying their stay in Paris very well indeed, doing sight-seeing only as it suited them, for they had ample time. Sometimes they went to the theatres, either to the *Théâtre Français* or to the *Odéon*. Some other evenings they went to the opera. Then they had a view of the structure all brilliantly lighted, and filled with beautiful women, and distinguished men, with their dainty colored gowns, and sparkling gems, and most polite deportment of person and speech.

They remembered when they had seen it

empty and commonplace, without this brilliant light, and dazzling congregation, one morning a month ago.

Letters from America reached them, recounting no particularly tragic occurrences further than those already told in earlier newspapers, about the rough times between the Carpetbaggers and the citizens of the South. Believing as he had always said, "All will come out right in the long run," Major Liscomb was now mentally less concerned about the Reconstruction of the country than at any other time since the Civil War had been ushered in.

One Sunday morning they walked over to the Protestant Church not far from them. The service being so like their own, gave them a touch of homesickness, which soon vanished before the vivacious conversation of Madame's guests.

Late in the afternoon they repaired to the Bois de Boulogne to see the Sunday afternoon frequenters of this park. An endless stream of people came and went for hours till a large policeman would be needed to conduct the crowd of persons who wanted to cross the streets, past the danger of vehicles. He had but to raise a hand for a moment, and that vast procession respectfully halted till he and his followers passed to the other side of the avenue. They had waited a long time perhaps, but could find not the least chance to make a dash for even the "safety island," provided for such a rush at the busiest junction of streets. The Bois extended to St. Cloud, which place they visited the next fine day they were able to drive,

Passing the Château, Lonchamps and the artificial Cascade, they visited the Grand Trianon, the private apartments of Louis XIV, XV and Napoleon I. There they saw the State Carriages of Napoleon I and III, their guide mentioning the enormous cost of the gorgeous vehicles, which are perfectly preserved.

Visiting the Palace and Galleries of Versailles, they looked upon the great paintings there, many of which represented Napoleon I in different important events of his wonderful career. They were led through the Palais des Glaces, where great mirrors lined the long apartment; thence to the Fountain and Bassin de Neptune and over beautifully green grass of the surrounding grounds.

Returning from this outing they took the Grand Route de Versailles, passing through Sèvres, Place de la Concorde, home. In walking sometimes they went into churches not particularly known to tourists. Though non-Catholics, Rene and Alice declared they were fast becoming it, for they could hardly keep from kneeling on the Prie-Dieu nearest them, and really did so if they were in these churches during the hour of service, leaning over the back of these small split bottomed chairs, with shelf on the back for the arms, and the prayer book to rest on. It is possible that they felt the solemnity of devotion as honestly as many a churchman there assembled.

Rene greatly desired to have some lessons of Madame M—— in voice culture, of whom she

had heard great praises as an ex-singer of note, and a very successful teacher.

Though pressed for time, as she always declared, Madame M—— decided to accept the new pupil, not promising to make of her a prima donna, however, though the voice was fine. "*Non, non, Mademoiselle, mais, je puis vous aider à chanter plus correctment, je vous assure!*"

Rene was quite satisfied never to become a public singer, and only too glad to become a pupil of the great teacher under any limitation, and soon presented herself for lessons. Madame had examined the voice, and understood its qualifications and its limitations. She always knew how to demand the full worth of her instructions, as the Liscombs soon learned, on reading her circular.

Rene practiced her vocal gymnastics faithfully, and her interest in the work greatly pleased her family. The *organ*, as a German would say of her voice, had grasped the Marchesi method with marvelous intuition, and had increased to wonderful proportions in good, clear notes. So, happily passed their last days in the great city of Paris.

## XVII.

## ART—A FETE DAY.

While Rene was vocalizing, the rest of the family chatted in the salon, or walked in the parks. Visits were paid to the galleries of the Louvre to see the paintings, the curios, the potteries of different peoples and different ages. These were deposited and exhibited in more than four hundred rooms of the old and the new buildings of the Louvre.

All the time Rene was looking, with a view to selecting paintings she might yet copy for their new home. In the galleries of the Luxembourg were the more modern works, chosen by an appointed committee, bought and kept there for a term of ten years, and then to be removed to the Louvre, unless the artist died before, when it would go to the Louvre sooner. These works were usually chosen from the yearly exposition of new works at the Palais de l'Industrie, in the Rue des Champs Elysee.

The palaces of the President of the Republic were also in this street, and near the Place de la Concorde. This great open square contained different monuments. One evening of a Fête day they had seen a group of men and women standing around a monument singing a sort of



Alsatian chant; their heads lowered and hands crossed. They had hung a large wreath of flowers on the monument of some hero, perhaps slain in battle between the French and Germans, over the possession of Alsace-Lorraine, on the Rhine. This had always been a bone of contention whenever the two nations got into a war with each other. Anyhow, they seemed to be doing a mournful honor to a countryman. They were Alsatians.

This Fête day had been observed in a different manner by different classes throughout the city. No carriages had been allowed in the immediate center during the afternoon, as the streets were too full of pedestrians. The Place de la Concorde, as well as other places, was brilliantly illuminated, showing clearer than ever the Cleopatra's Needle, brought from Egypt, and placed on the exact spot where numbers of nobility had been guillotined in the turbulent revolutions of the volatile nation. That same guillotine may be seen elsewhere in the city to this day, in a museum, perhaps.

The criminal of the present is beheaded in another part of the city in a prison yard. These tourists heard of but one or two such executions while sojourning in the capital. It was suggested to them at table that they might see an execution if they chose, as places on balconies and roofs near the prison could be hired for them if one applied long enough beforehand. They did not hire places.

On this evening many people danced in the streets, on platforms laid down for the purpose.

Very many went to the outlying parks to amuse themselves, as a German would say, "*Mit kit und kegel*," which means "With children, and everything for a grand picnic." Dancing, eating and drinking, and lying around enjoying a day's outing and rest was the order of this grand Fête day for the middle and lower classes.

Alas, next evening's newspaper recounted a sad story of a tragedy, enacted during the afternoon of the Fête day. Everybody read it, and there was a lively buzz of voices that evening at dinner when discussing it.

The story was about two couples who had become friends on this same Fête day one year before. One of them had a child almost two years old. The new friends visited each other very often, till the mother of the little one had become violently enamored with the husband of her friend. Then there was a jealous wrath between them.

They met at length, talked the affair over quite frankly, the offending woman vowing on her knees, in great shame and humiliation, never to offend again. Her husband did not forgive her, but turned her and the child out, to shift for herself. Her mother was too poor to do much for her.

The husband of the forgiving wife was often away from home a day or so at a time during the next few months. Coming home one morning, he dropped his hand bag in one of their rooms, smoked and lounged about. His wife proposed, as it was a Fête day, that they go out to a little park quite away from the city, and have a rustic

dinner at a restaurant there. He agreed, but excused himself to go to a barber near by. She prepared herself for the happy outing, glad to have him with her for the day. He did not come for her, and after waiting with hat and gloves on until her patience was worn out, she happened to see the hand bag at her feet. She tried to open it. It was not possible, and she dashed across the street to find a *serrurier*. He came to their neat, pretty and clean apartment, opened the bag and disappeared.

The now jealous, suspicious wife soon confirmed her fears by finding a woman's small veil and other belongings; but her greatest find was a letter, in which was told the fictitious name he had employed when he had rented an apartment; number and street written out in full, for his wife's former friend and her child, about a mile away.

She seized the tiny pistol out of the mass of contents of the bag, and put it in a pocket of her skirt. Then placed the stiletto she sometimes carried when on the street alone, in her bosom, and took a carriage to the written number.

She had some difficulty with the concierge, who did not want her to come in. She finally got in, and went up to the newly hired apartment. Rapping at the door, she supposed the right one, she got no response. Continuing to rap, she awakened the child, whose voice she recognized as that of her friend's baby.

She then threatened to bring an officer—a policeman, at once, if they did not open the door,

and persisted, telling them she knew all, and would forgive, if they would let her in. The husband opened the door, and as she went in, he dashed from behind it, rushed down the stairs before she could get her pistol out of her clothing, and into the street instantly.

The offending woman hid behind the high headboard of the ponderous bedstead, for she read murder in the face of the maddened woman confronting her, and got a glimpse of the pistol in her hand. She put the child on the bed, as she rushed about the room, now dodging the shots as best she could, to be caught and stabbed several times. At least a half dozen cuts and two shots had finally struck her down. Her adversary, believing she had killed her, left the apartment. Her victim was fatally wounded! In almost a dying condition the wounded woman had been carried to a hospital, and a priest sent to her.

The murderer had herself driven to the quarters of her mother-in-law, whom she carried with her in the carriage to police headquarters, telling her on the way of her husband's conduct, and of the tragedy she had just enacted.

At police headquarters of their precinct, she frankly related the thing she had done, the provocation, and said, "Madame will die, I know!"

"Well, that was a horrid ending of a holiday. She will not be punished, I hope," some one said. "Only she will probably be imprisoned a long time before her trial can be brought about," another one added.

The Liscomb family often went to an English library where the papers and magazines of the day could be found in the reading rooms, a pot of tea and cakes or butter and bread were served, if desired, at your reading table. The tables were small, therefore more secluded. Everything was quietly done, and hardly an occasional whisper was heard.

Major Liscomb commented as he went along, "Observe will you! English everywhere in the world! It is not worth while to work one's self to death over languages. English can be heard anywhere, and if you have mastered French you can get on, almost over the world."

"No, don't you remember mother's little Indian, Nancy, and her language, father?" laughingly asked Ned's wife.

Mrs. Liscomb said, "Well, a sign language is also good, as we learned when we first came here, don't you know?"

"Don't I know? Don't you know? Certainly you all remember the many deaf and dumb mutes not so many miles from our own plantation, the sad result of the intermarriages in the families of Cousin Jonas Wilson. These have a sign language of their own and talk rapidly to each other. No wonder you all appreciate sign languages. French and German don't count for much in such situations," replied Major Liscomb.

Reading from the evening paper, Rene announced, "Well, the wretched creature who was shot and stabbed so often, has died in the hospital, after five days' extreme suffering, pray-



ing for forgiveness, and forgiving all who had sinned against her."

"It always seems that the time flies, sure enough, if one is counting on going somewhere," said Alice.

"Indeed you are right," concurred Rene. "I have not done half so much here as I intended. Just one picture copied! That is simply awful! But I must have another!"

"Daughter, go and copy it. We can wait. We are quite comfortable, if only the mutton and meats were better—that is, longer cooked. I always did abominate raw meats, you know." And Major Liscomb shrugged his broad shoulders, as if he had mastered the ordinary French shrug, so often met in this city of such varied and interesting experiences—from the daintiest sublime to the opposites. Somehow, when over at the Luxembourg, among the elected marbles and paintings, they had forgotten to return by the ruins of the Bastille, whose fall is celebrated on every fourteenth of July, about as faithfully as Americans celebrate the Fourth, so they journeyed once more to the *Quartier Latin* to visit the remains of the old cruel prison there, of which is left little more than a part of the foundation. They recalled much they had read of it, and this time approved the work of the *Canaille*.

Another long drive over the grand Boulevard and through the Neuilly Gates again, back to the Boulevard for an hour, then home, was their farewell of Paris, the Beautiful! Then the packing and starting!

The dainty sévres cups were safely packed at

the salesroom where they had purchased them, just ready for the trunk of some one of the party, as also was a bit of Gobelin tapestry they had secured one day when guests had been admitted to the manufacturing rooms of this renowned cloth, to see the manner in which it was produced.

Many gloves and gowns and draperies and hand embroidered stuffs had been accumulated at odds and ends sales to carry home.

Leaving teacher, Pension and very interesting friends, our tourists went by rail down the Valley of the Seine past the old and interesting city of Rouen, to the old seaside town of Dieppe, in sight of the near by and other resort, Ostend.

Dieppe and Ostend were quiet now, compared with the season at such watering places, and only voyagers at Dieppe, ready to cross the Channel, were met. The party was fortunate in not being seriously seasick, as the time of crossing was so short. Rene said she was only "getting a good ready" for a fit of *mal de mer*, when they were landed at Newhaven.

Not long afterwards they were in London and housed in their former hotel, to remain a few days. None of the others knew with what agony of mind Rene again entered this hostelry, where she had heard the enchanting tenor, so like the voice of one who had wrecked some years of her life's happiness. Alas, it may have been himself!

Alice and Ned were not slow in taking in the cruel situation, since Alice had heard the same voice at the same moment Rene had heard it,

from another floor, and Ned remembered the story of it which Alice had told him when on their bridal tour of the Netherlands. Their eyes met, and each read the other's thoughts, "How stupid of us to come to this hotel again!"

Rene had never alluded to it, and in all their confidences it seemed she never would. They went to Westminster on Sunday, "This time not to be married," as Alice said, "but to jog their memories of their vows." And indeed they reflected much over the somewhat sad wedding, for Ned was still an invalid at the time.

Each one of the family found mail from America, and from a few friends they had made while abroad, so each one went away to their particular apartments to read the news, Major Liscomb taking the newspapers with his letters, so they saw little of each other until about dinner time. They had a little unpacking to do. The young people appeared in pretty dresses and fashionable coiffures, made up after late Parisian styles.

The dinner was more like the dear old dinners in America this time. The mutton and tart were now replaced by so many things they had longed for on the Continent.

Things began to seem like America, which unfortunate country was yet the dearest one to them.

The next day they took a carriage for the morning and another in the afternoon to visit places they had not seen when in London before, as also to some they had visited. Among them, they went into New Broad Street, St. James

Square, Trafalgar Square and to Nelson Monument, American Exchange, Royal Exchange, The Strand, Somerset House, occupying the site of the palace of the luckless Protector, Somerset.

In the afternoon, they started in sight-seeing by passing the Mansion House, which was the official residence of the Lord Mayor, Albert Hall, Albert Memorial and Buckingham Palace. Through a stretch of three parks, in Hyde Park they encountered fine equipages in plenty.

## XVIII.

## HOME—THE OLD CEMETERY.

Before leaving London, Ned ordered a two wheeler and he and his wife went into Westminster, and loitered a minute on the spot where they had taken their marriage vows sometime before.

It was pleasant in after years to recall it. From the Abbey they were driven to the elegant quarters of the clergyman who had married them; were politely received, and went away with the benediction of the gentle old man sounding in their ears a precious remembrance: "Peace be with you now and always!"

The family went to Glasgow, visited the Art Gallery, particularly to see a certain Holland painting. Eight miles out took their steamer.

The return steamer was of a popular and safe line, but not such a large one as the one that had brought them over to Europe. Being yet early in the traveling season, they had a rather quiet voyage; far more so than when later one encounters such tremendous throngs. They were attracted by a genteel old couple, who seemed much at home on ship and sociable.

It was the eighth time they had visited their old home in Scotland since going to live in Mis-



souri, in the States, and this was their last voyage. All the older relatives in Glasgow were dead, and it was not pleasant to visit those who filled their vacancies. They had gone to the new country when first married.

The old couple were well-to-do farmers, but people of intelligence, having kept in touch, by reading, with things European and American. The old gentleman had a relative on the Edinburgh Review, who had always sent him European newspapers, until he died a few years before. They were an interesting pair.

This time on the ocean, Rene was seized with a couple days' seasickness. She declared she was as one intoxicated, or as one swooning away under the influence of chloroform, during the awful stress of the constant nausea of those two days.

When, however, it passed away, she enjoyed the voyage, though feeling quite "puny and weak."

A few days were spent in New York, touring places with which they were unacquainted. Major and Ned met a few men whom they had long known, and talked over many things connected with the Reconstruction of the South, and of the prospects of the cotton business, in which Ned now felt an earnest interest. First and above all, he was still a rebel so far as he could be, and live in America, and he meant to sell the cotton to foreign countries just as long as ever they could not have the necessary machinery and mills to use it up in the South.

So he advised his father not to buy one bit of

building material North that could be got in the South. Approved Architect's books were bought and studied. One after another of the plans for the plantation house was discarded, as cost and availability decided the matter. But from the lot of them they had evolved a mixed plan that suited them very well for a comfortable home.

One morning Ned's wife took a train out of New York City to seek out her mother, of whom she had yet had no news for a long time. Back in the interior of the State she arrived at the station of the town where the mother had lived since the Liscombs and Alice went abroad.

She found her mother very ill of pneumonia. After coming North one cold after another had resulted in tuberculosis. Now it seemed the end was not far off.

"O, mother, why have you kept all this from me?" moaned Alice, as the true situation dawned upon her; and she was overwhelmed with grief.

"Alice, child, listen to me. My apparent cold would be so much better at times that I believed it was nothing serious. I wrote you once something about it."

"I never got such a letter!"

"No, no, I know it, for the letter had missed you and came back to me." She was speaking with difficulty, and a red spot burned on her cheeks.

"Perhaps you would better not speak any more now," said Alice.

"The doctor has forbidden it, but Alice, will

you take me down home and bury me in the Liscomb Cemetery?"

"Yes, I will. Ned said very lately that my father had been temporarily buried in their family burying ground, but as I had married into their family, we could leave father there, and that there was room beside him for you. I could not bring myself to write it to you. Don't talk; let me talk till you are better." Alice's eyes were overflowing.

"Don't restrain me. There is not any time to lose. I am awfully ill! Be always thoughtful of your aunt, who has done the best she could for me, though crazed with her own misfortunes."

"Dearest mother, I will look after her, but her son Joseph is good to her, I suppose?" Alice said, rather inquiringly.

"Child, child, he is a drunken, bad-tempered young man, and is now married to Annie Miller, and gone West." Mrs. Wood spoke with difficulty. "I've loaned them money sometimes. They owe me! Let it go! Our means is almost exhausted. Here is all I got from the plantation, after all those miserable debts your father owed were settled." She reached under the feather tick for a bundle of papers and bills. Then she slept.

The awakening was the last momentary struggle of Life and Death. Death won! It was a fearful shock to Alice, who had not thought her so ill.

The kind aunt led her away and the doctor gave her a sleeping potion which chained her

faculties in slumber, but she had said, "Prepare her to go South at once," and when she awoke, everything had been prepared by the undertaker and friends of her mother and her mother's good sister, who were assembled to see them off on the sad journey southward, after a prayer.

The undertaker accompanied her with the remains of her gentle indulgent parent, until Ned and the rest of the family joined them on the road South. The aunt was also with her to the journey's end.

For Ned's wife, it was a cruel homecoming. For the rest, it was a sad one. Cousin Jonas Wilson, with several of the old acquaintances, met them with hearse and carriages and they drove right out to the old stone-walled burying ground of several generations of the Liscombs. The locusts, the persimmon trees, the cedars had multiplied astonishingly all about, inside and outside the low, thick, vine covered—in many places—old wall. The myrtle-ivy had covered every inch of the interior ground till one could hardly say where was and where was not a grave. Fig shrubs and the brave little briar rose and a yellow flag bloom were growing in most of the spaces these others had left. It was a romantic spot, and there they laid the mother beside the father of Alice Wood Liscomb.

Cousin Jonas could get no clergyman for the occasion, so he read from his Bible, and talked and prayed. By his inexhaustible kindness, they were comfortably housed with his large family and with his neighbors, "until they could do

better," as he had once before said when he had redeemed them from the swamp, as Rene put it.

The old frame of wood down by the Willow Spring Branch, once used as cotton gin and packing house, was now put into repair, and when a comfortable, temporary home was made of it, the family took possession. The younger people were much amused at the prospective fun they should have in this camping out life till the home was built.

The cook and Mammy Nance lived in old Ben's cabin, where the mob had stored their stolen plunder the night of the fire. These women soon christened the rambling old frame building housing the whie family, "de Big House."

The lean-to shed joining the larger building was converted into a kitchen. Being handicapped by many needs of material and skilled workmen, it was a long time before the new home was finished. A woman was soon found to do the laundry work, but was treated as interloper by the other two of the cabin. Turning on them, she gave them "a mighty plain piece of her mind."

"You good fer nuffin N'Yo'k niggers! Ah haint got no use fer you nohow! You'se so sassy. Dat's all you'se learnt in de Nawth sho! Ef dey cain't gib me anodder cabin 'out my libbin wid you all, ah done go fom heah mighty sudden! D'yo' all heah me?"

The Major and Ned and a black man soon made a hut for her, where a lone stone chimney stood, quite away from the house servants. With



tubs, flatirons and necessary paraphernalia and a big iron kettle out before her cabin, Eliza went to live in it.

Mammy Nance was appointed to the care of the poultry. A number of fine hens and a colossal master of the Hen-Harem were sent over to the plantation by the generous and genial, sweet women of other homes in the vicinity. In the whole world there are no kindlier, no more liberal and thoughtful, nor sympathetic women than these Southern neighbors of the Liscombs! It was good to be at home!

"See!" said Rene one day. "There comes another cart down the road with more food for the 'wanderers,' I'll wager a cookie!" And sure enough, with dainty napkins over dishes of delicious meats and desserts, and baskets of fresh vegetables, eggs and a jug of rich fresh milk, the cart stopped before their "château," as they named the old cotton gin. Having no garden yet to produce such things, and living too far from the market, these things fell about them like the manna of the Bible story.

It was not too late in the season to plant some eatables for the autumn and winter living. So they hired any negro who came to them to get work, knowing some neighbor had sent him, and soon had thrifty gardens springing up in the rejuvenated and rested fields.

The late corn seemed to rush in its rapid growth, fearing the frosts that might overtake it. So thought the Major as he walked about the plantation, enjoying the simple things of life yet

more than he had the historic marbles and masterful paintings and palaces of Europe.

It was the Major's policy to keep Ned in the opinion that he was the important man in the construction of the new house, and could be little spared to join the political Reconstruction blundering going on in town. But this could not last.

Ned was young and he was alert to everything extraordinary going on in his county and State. About this time, the annual barbecue of the vicinity was due. It had been suspended during five years, but every one thought it time to revive the custom and have a grand reunion of old friends who had survived the desolation of families and country.

For the Brunswick stew and the barbecued pigs an experienced cook was found and carefully questioned as to his qualifications for the office, with as much interest as if he were being selected to guard a voting place on election day in town.

Squirrels, birds, rabbits and chickens, even guineas were sent, with peas, young corn, lima beans, tomatoes and red peppers for the concoction of the Brunswick stew. Trenches were now dug for the fire, above which the pigs were to be roasted. After the fire had been burned to embers the meat was put on the iron grate made to hold it, and occasionally the cook dipped from a bucket a mixture of salt, pepper, lemon juice, vinegar and butter, with which he basted the hot meat from time to time. "It was the daintiest barbecued meat ever eaten!" everybody said.

Every one who had known the Liscombs in years before the war, and every one who had not, but were invited to welcome them home, had grasped their hands with much show of friendship, for they considered this assembling of friends an ovation to the family, once more at home, to become one of them.

All the family had taken pains to be present, knowing the kindly, neighborly portent of the affair. Every woman had brought a well filled basket of sweets and cakes and fresh bread such as the European tourists had hardly enjoyed during all their wanderings. At least, was it the good, appetizing, familiar cookery of their dear South mingled with love! Yes, love that makes the world live and move. Love that sustains the soul in trial, that keeps the mind from souring and courage from fainting! reaching the helping hand even in death.

Returning through the pines and past the merry brook of their own old home, the family felt a more sublime and fulsome happiness than ever experienced when returning from any view of imperial palace and garden in the old world, or from any art gallery. The older ones saying to themselves, "Blessed, thrice blessed is simplicity! We can live out our lives here in great happiness and comfort with such precious friendships that the cruel war has only confirmed, and given a sweet humility," said the wife.

The cabins of the negroes were overhauled, and the field hands made comfortable. Mrs. Liscomb got a new medicine chest and stores for it,

so soon as she found a place to buy one, just as she had done when the slaves were chattels of their estate. And the blacks soon learned to go after "Mis' Riah," instead of a doctor, which, in few cases, they had ever been forehanded enough to do.

They bought cattle and horses so soon as they could get good ones. The field hands had poor old scrubs now of their own, to help make their living, now that they got daily pay for their work, from sun up to sun down, according to the old manner in slave days; the same old bell telling when to begin, when to stop.

Their rent was counted in now, as well as the corn meal, the meat and groceries furnished by the planter generally to the families who lived in the cabins. The house servants ate at a wooden table in the kitchen after the family had eaten. Their main food being corn bread and salt pork, with, sometimes, vegetables, left from the tables of the whites. The women took the coffee left over also, and putting water to it nearly all had a small cup for breakfast.

The blacks are moderate eaters, requiring only simple food in the South. They are, for the most part, a contented, happy-go-lucky people, with numerous children of various shades of black.

The cook and the laundry woman soon brought their babies to the plantation.

## XIX.

## LIFE ON THE PLANTATION—DEAD.

Genial, lovable, generous as the old and the new South always seemed, they were gifted with a certain severe strain in their hot blood, generally persistent enough to get what they demanded. Before the war they got rid of objectionable citizens by frankly telling them to "Go!"

Since the war was over, the same old trait had cropped out again. A man in the community had just been allowed ten days to find another abiding place for a demeanor that aroused the country around him. His wife and two or three children could go to him later on. The young woman with whose name the scandal was connected, had been tabooed by the neighborhood for some months.

This trait led the male of the country to organize societies, or secret orders, to drive out the Northern Carpetbagger and negro rulers of his Southern States. Their ghostly uniform was enough to terrify the black people out of all notion of politics for themselves, for some time.

The North soon saw that they yet had spirit and resolve to establish suitable governments in their States, to suit themselves, and retired in a



certain degree from encounter with them, rather than continue the bloodshed again renewed in the South. But this condition had not yet been fully settled when the Liscombs came home. And with firm determination, they set themselves about Reconstruction.

With bald and bold movement and much terrifying shotgun emphasis, these secret organizations convinced the others that the South was a Southern white man's government.

The country wanted peace. They remembered the unspeakable horrors of war that that first gun against Fort Sumter had brought to North and to South. The black man, though free now, did not care for politics. His slow, patient nature did not want it at all. If he had, his superior numbers could have got it. His character inclined him to peace.

While slavery existed, he was a political power against himself, inasmuch as his master was allowed certain political counts for every certain number of slaves he owned. And now, though free, he was not wanted with the voice of the rulers at all, to whom he had always been an aid.

Many outrageous things happened, by some people understood to be the Consequences of War, no matter who had begun it. That the South endeavored to quit the government and found one for themselves, Without the Consent of the Governed, did not matter now.

Peace, Peace was desired by the North and by many of the South, above all other considerations!

So the conquest was soon over and the South finally got affairs arranged according to their wishes and needs. And the hatchet ought to have been buried right then. Through State's Rights they accomplish about all they want. But there will always be, as there always was, agitators who are alert to any mistake the government may make, no matter if it be remedied the next hour. If such people had always before them a just sense of the Consequences of War, they certainly would not be so ready to instigate another one.

That was about the way Major Liscomb measured the situation. His son was not so moderate, and he soon joined the secret organization that had made things politic hum. His old wound troubled him sometimes, so that violent night excursions were impossible for him.

The lovable woman of the South would give the last drop of her heart's blood in patriotism, if necessary, just as freely as her Northern sister would support her husband or her brother's patriotism, as they saw it. So the Château Liscomb, as the old cotton gin and packing house was now christened, was often the scene of congregated women, who had met to make up the frightful uniform of the "Reconstruction Party" of the community.

Rene was tiring of everything already, and one day announced that "It is time I had done some sketching before every flower has ceased to bloom." And forthwith donned suitable costume and assembled her stray paints, brushes and whatever was used in her art work, and took her

way to the garden, to sketch the beautiful morning glory blossoms she had often longed to paint. Selecting an exquisite spray, she had soon fixed the whole, coloring and all, upon canvas, forever; as also a lot of roses.

A spray of red mammosa and one from the myrtle tree following the morning glories, in becoming immortalized by her brushes. She returned late, quite content with her beautiful and pleasant work. Another day she put the greatest, the very finest oak of the remnant of trees that had not been injured by fire or axe the night of their fire, upon canvas. She did not want it daubed. The last glimpse of Captain Budd Stone she ever had was from under it, as he mounted his horse to ride home that night before their wedding morning. She remembered that the moon had suddenly peeped from behind a cloud and shown his beautiful and impassioned face in all its manly magnificence. She remembered every feature, and how often she had yearned to make a copy of it, since she had learned to paint with any conception of true art.

Pride and resentment had always prevented it. Pride would still keep her from painting, in the picture of the tree, the handsome man she saw cross his saddle that night, as she stood upon the veranda. She thought of the mocking bird and the whippoorwill she heard also that same hour!

Sometimes the thin walls of the old cotton gin and packing house echoed and reverberated with sounds of music, when Rene took her violin and Alice accompanied with piano.

The three younger people also sang. Ned played the flute he had not touched since his college days. As every one of them had had vocal lessons, the music was very agreeable. To these musicales came friends from other plantations and from town.

Major and Mrs. Liscomb contented themselves with being hosts and auditors. Mrs. Wood, Alice's aunt, had returned, not long after the funeral of her sister, to the North, and to be near her dear dead son's grave. This son that had been her sacrifice to the god of war.

These were the happiest days of their lives, so all declared. This simple life in the "old Château," where they had to live for a whole year before they could move into the new house. The scuppernongs were mellowing a bit indeed, as they were putting things to rights, for they did not hurry about it. And the hanging of the pictures was always decided by Rene, as she boasted; being proud that she was the artist of the Liscomb family.

"Ah, home again! Husband, are you not glad? I am so happy!"

"Glad? Glad doesn't express it! Now if these political affairs were only settled, we might breathe easier," said Major Liscomb, growing a little more serious and thoughtful.

This had been a glorious cotton and tobacco season. Peas and peanuts were "full crop," and the garnering soon began. The corn, potatoes, millet and hay had no rivals. The fruit had been less fortunate, for a late frost in the spring had wrecked the most of it.

There was rarely any want of help in the garnering time of crops in the old days. At present it was not always easy to find field hands, so some cotton was not picked, and sometimes the cattle were turned into the pea fields, along with the fattening hogs, to gather their own feed.

Most of the South accepted the thirteenth Amendment with expressed reconciliation, though, when help was short, it is possible that they felt otherwise.

When the excavation was made for the new house, the whole family had been present at the uncovering of the boxes in the wine cellar, and to their extreme delight, not one box had been scorched. So now they unpacked the much treasured old family silverware. Everything was just as clean and sound as when hastily stored in the little cellar the night of the burning of the old plantation house.

The box containing Rene's wedding presents was not opened yet, as she had suggested letting them alone till some other time. All the boxes had been packed for months before the fire, in anticipation of the very event that had hidden them from the robbers and incendiaries in the wine cellar.

Their hiding place was to have been, however, in an empty grave in the family cemetery, but the robbers came unexpectedly, and hardly thinking of fire, the family had to rush them into the wine cellar, below the main cellar. As all had turned out, it had been a fortunate hiding place.

The family gave a house warming, as their



first reception of friends was called by the delightful people whom they wished to entertain in the new house. These dear, kind friends, who had made such a joyous home coming for these wanderers in strange countries!

The reception was a success in every way. The music and the dancing, which followed, were also fine.

Mammy Nance and Eliza were in their element as they directed the newer servants how to "Pass 'roun' de frushments."

"Lawd, Mis' Rene, dey is all upshot with youse all fine house, and de singin' yo' all done for 'em. Dey calls yo' fiddle a violet ur violin. Ah hearn 'em tell one anudder 'bout yo' all larnin' lots in trabin'."

Eliza had to tell some such conversations she had overheard, too.

"One dem Wilson cousins she say yo' all fines' folks she ebba met. She say yo' paint an' sing dess fine, lak de opry folks she hear one time in N'Yo'k singin'. Dat ar Quinnell man he say he know'd Marster Ned up Nawth, at college an' he dess fine as silk; an' he glad Marster Ned come back heah."

Rene finally made a picture of the new house, with Alice and Ned, and the parents standing on the veranda. He was a handsome young man and his sister was proud of him. He had been her defender when they were children.

He had been ready to stain his life and his soul with manslaughter when he saw her lying in the almost deadlike swoon that Budd Stone's act had caused her. Indeed to this hour he had al-

ways felt a protective care of her; it may have been because there were but these two children in the family.

There was a striking resemblance between them, which could not have been closer between a man and a woman. She had grasped the art of portrait painting marvelously, though an amateur.

Ned and Will Quinell had been fellow students at the Northern college when the war "broke out." And when the one was making up his military company, Quinell was the first to sign his name on the enlistment roll, as they used to say to each other, "to shoot Yankees."

Ned would certainly have died on the field at Chickamauga Creek but for the intervention of Lieutenant Quinell, who ran down some camp followers and pressed them into carrying his Captain into shelter; his own men being all slain, exhausted or scattered when the battle was over.

Their families were now very intimate friends, and, be the function musical or card party, Quinell was sure to be present. Now they belonged to the same Reconstruction Clan, as his ancestral Scottish blood seemed to fit him. He advised Ned not to go on horse with the Clan when the work was too severe, for he always felt a brotherly responsibility for him, knowing well the narrow escape Captain Ned had pulled through, and the danger always pending.

Their private musicale had just ended one night; the parents were abed, and Lieutenant Quinell and wife were already taking leave of the Liscombs when they saw Ned wipe a ghastly

gush of blood from his mouth, and a stream of it kept coming up.

A sad look of despair passed between the two men, and the three women were almost paralyzed with horror. All, however, handed over their handkerchiefs to Ned. Quinell and "Big Sam Thompson," who was waiting to close up the house, supported Ned to his room, where the women had run to prepare the bed for him. Quinell bade him do no talking, as every effort to speak almost choked him or strangled him.

The parents tried every remedy they could think of. The doctor came so soon as Sam Thompson, with a fast horse, could bring him. It was too late! the violent hemorrhage had exhausted and strangled him and the deadly pallor showed that he was dead! The good old parents were silently wringing their hands! The shock was too great for tears, as they bent over their dead first born! Their sacrifice to the gods of war!

Ned's wife and Rene were crazed with grief and walked wildly about. Next day a messenger clad in black passed through the neighboring town; stopping at each of the best houses he rang the door bell, or clattered the knocker. He handed in a black edged sheet of parchment paper, with soft black ribbons hanging from it; requested that it be read by the master, or the mistress of the house, and then be returned to him on the veranda, where he would wait for it.

This was the manner of announcing a death and funeral in the aristocratic old town, where no daily newspaper was published. With sol-

emn and appropriate words written on this paper was the sad and sudden death and funeral of Captain Ned Liscomb given out to the public of his county.

Into the hands of the friend of his youth, of his fellow student, his rescuer at Chickamauga, was put the arrangements for the funeral and burial of Captain Ned Liscomb.

The undertaker took an unusual interest in this funeral, knowing that the man was a brother clansman, and that to his last hour of life he was true to their beloved South. They also knew he had died for his patriotism, as certainly as if his death had occurred the day he got his death wound on the battlefield a few years ago.

Reverend Charles Ferdinand Torrence was brought to read the sensibly simple, sublime funeral service. And the hymns were selected by the feeble, heartbroken parents.

## XX.

## EARTH TO EARTH—THE QUINELLS.

The long, wretched hours before a funeral, in this case passed all too soon. The suddenness of the death had so shocked, so benumbed the relatives that a realization that death had really occurred was hardly yet impressed upon them; and a wish to postpone the burial was clamoring for expression in the minds of the four immediate and bereaved mourners, the parents, Rene and Alice.

The floral decorations were conducted by their friend, the wife of Will Quinell. The roses were even more beautiful than those of the last months of summer, because of the autumnal cooling rains. There was yet an abundance of flowers and vines, and long garlands and arches had been prepared everywhere. A pathway from the casket to the hearse had been strewn thickly with roses and blossoms and autumn tinted leaves.

There were branches of Ned's favorite shrubs and trees over the doors. Beautiful made-up emblems were about the casket, and in all the available corners. The grave, in the old burying ground, where they had laid Alice's mother two years before, was covered by beautiful blos-



soms. Every one within a large radius of the Liscombs had sent these silent tokens of tenderest sympathy. Even the negro women had found in their little gardens "somethin'" for Marster Ned. The inside of the open grave was lined with vines and roses.

The family had taken leave of the dear one, with doors closed to others, before many of the others had congregated. Then the black people were marched past the casket, with lips dumb with awe, as they took a last look at their good friend and master. Major Liscomb supported Ned's wife, and Rene took care of the tottering mother, along with Will Quinell's help. Then the family was led to an upper room, from which they heard with bursting hearts the reading, the prayer, the talk and the singing of the sad service. After which a long line of friends passed by the casket, on, out at another door, into their carriages.

The undertaker and Will Quinell had so arranged that the family passed down a back stairway into their carriage.

It was but a short distance to the little cemetery. Slowly, solemnly the remains were lowered, the prayers read; then the brotherly friends, neighbors and clansmen passed for a last look into the snow white vault. Each one dropped a tiny evergreen spray upon the casket, and, with soldier-like tread, passed out of the little cemetery; a few were ex-Confederates. All were grave and sorrowing.

When Rene and Alice looked down into the white cemented bottom of the grave for the last

time and upon the casket containing the loved husband and brother, there was no more controlling their great sorrow, and in absolute collapse they were both supported to the carriage. The Major and his wife were loth to quit the grave for some time yet.

Some of the old friends had remained at the house, to try to make the homecoming less difficult for the stricken family. They had opened the shutters and put the house in order.

For a long time these same friends took care that the lonely family should be surrounded by old associates every night. Mrs. and Mr. Quinell came almost every day for a while, and carried them in their own surry to the mineral spring not far off, and drove with them to the cemetery; then through the picturesque roads checkering the dense pine, oak and cedar forests. Sometimes Mrs. Quinell brought her sewing and urged the ladies to sew with her, which they very frequently did.

When no others could spend the night at the plantation, the faithful Quinells brought their baby and remained with them. This kind practice was continued throughout the long winter, all the neighbors planning to give them as little chance as possible to indulge in solitary mourning. They brought many a new dish of their own cooking with them.

The Quinells had bought the Stone plantation soon after the disastrous raid and fire. They rebuilt the partly destroyed house. The four miles between theirs and the Liscomb house was traveled over by Mrs. Quinell in an easy new phaeton

her husband had given her, and with a good revolver that she was not afraid of, in the seat, at her side, as was considered a useful accessory. No worse demoralization existed here than reigned in the North since the degraded condition the war had left both sides of the country. She often prevailed on some one of the family she visited, to accompany her over the country.

They met no outrage, no insult further than the shallow impudence of a drunken party of negroes one afternoon, for the rough element that ever prompted impudence of a serious nature in their county had met the halter or the shot gun promptly and uncompromisingly. So the negro was a rather respectful creature, back in the country; particularly where the servile condition of slavery days had not yet been contaminated nor died out. But a new and another generation was coming on.

The Liscombs loved to see her dear little phaeton waving itself about in the lane and hurrying over the red and stony way at any time, for it always brought a cheery, delightful friend. The Major was fast losing interest in his business, and was glad many a time to have the strong young mind of his son's friend come to his assistance; he was too old to keep things going as they ought to go.

Sam Thompson had sent to New York for Pete to join him on the old plantation, which he had done. They were barbecuing a pig not far from the old gin and packing house when Pete arrived. "Yum, yum," he said as the delicious odour had reached him, before he yet saw

it, and his appetite was well whetted before the negroes had been sent a piece of it. There were at least twenty of them sitting about hungry for it. They now ate their meals there.

They were not all married. The married ones sometimes had the five o'clock breakfast in their own cabins. But the old Château had become quite a hotel for the blacks, and they often called it "de tave'n." There was no end to the pickaninnies. Married or not married, their progeny could hardly be enumerated. And the types embraced every feature that had ever appeared in any dark man's land on earth. But yet there were some quite black among them. There were descendants of the Negro and Indian, descendants of the Negro and white man. The Negro and Indian types being possibly the best looking of all. The whiter, the uglier were they, in most cases.

There was one curious type, always strange to everybody. And was supposed to be the Croatans, pale, sickly and quite homely, with pinkish blue eyes. It is thought that these are descended from Indian, White and Mulatto races, and that they are descendants from an early colony of English settlers at Roanoke, who disappeared and never has been accounted for. It had been arranged between the colony and their English leaders, who returned to the mother country, that if the colony left their settlement they should cut the name of their next place on a signboard. The colony was gone and the word Croatan was carved on a tree, when

White and his new colonists arrived at Roanoke, two years after he left them.

They searched the island of Croatan; not a trace of them was ever discovered, though England sent ships over to search for them. In late years these curious types have been thought to be descendants of this lost colony, and Indians and negroes. It is a sorry type.

On the Liscomb place was a man or so of this peculiar *mêlange*. Strange in looks, in character unreadable.

At last the rainy, dreary winter was yielding to milder spring. There were always fresh wild flowers in the house, brought by friends or gathered by Mammy Nance, 'Liza or 'Lizbeth. One day 'Lizbeth brought in a dozen young chickens to show the family that she had found in her cleaning up of the wood piles.

They were so helpless, so dainty and so beautiful that Rene forthwith looked up her paints and brushes to paint a picture of them. Succeeding, while the old art impulse was upon her, she copied the fluffy little things very faithfully.

Every day brought some pleasant, surprising revival of nature. Later the fields were dotted over with men plowing, sowing fertilizer and seeds. Later yet, women, boys and girls and men were rushing the "chopping cotton," and "grassing it," while bursts of song and a curious yodel accompanied their long hours of work sometimes. The Major was growing more listless.

Will Quinell kept the two younger women of the plantation posted about the works of the



Clan. What they could not understand from the newspapers, he explained as well as the rules of the oaths that the mystic circle had emblazoned on their frightful uniform and banners permitted. The order was terrifying the blacks quite out of any desire for political enhancement, and the Northern Carpetbagger into a willingness to turn affairs over to his Southern brother for adjustment.

It really did not matter about details, the main things of the disruption having been won, the high principals of the late fight was an indifferent incident.

Though the Clan had a large following, it was hard to know who was and who wasn't a member of it. Their main work was performed with masks on their faces. They became such a power that everything went down before its determined sentences, office or life, as suited.

The negro soon thoroughly understood his situation in the South, and continued to serve masters as before, only now he began to accumulate some property and work a little less. He began to own a horse or so, a buggy; and schools, very few just now, however, and churches were erected on a corner of a plantation a few miles apart, too.

The numerous progeny thrived in spite of many hardships, so the South had more negroes now than they had white men, as in the old days, though there was a continual immigration to the North. They could now take a holiday from their work, if it happened they desired one, at any time.

"Mis' Riah, Mammy Nance she say she cain't ha'dly walk no mo', an' she say, yessum, thanky, she do wish yo' all sen' huh some mo' dat co'n bread, fus' and fomos,' fuh huh dinnuh. She say, dat liniment done hoped de rheumatisms mouty." All this pompous message was delivered by 'Lizabeth, as she stood outside Mrs. Liscomb's window.

When she got the things requested, she curtsied and curtsied more humbly as she remarked how many things were sent.

"Yessum, thanky, ma'm, thanky, ma'm! Ah tole huh how much you done sont huh. Mammy Nance she gittin' long so'ta ole. Dis mo'nin' she seem puhty peart for a lil while, den she fell out mouty soon."

Cousin Jonas Wilson's family had always been foremost among the attentive ones in this day of trouble, as faithfully as they had been in those cruel days of fire and sword "and famine," as the Liscombs used to add. Jonas either came or sent over every few days to learn news of the mourning neighbors, or, if seasonable, to invite them over to his home to an "ice cream luncheon." His enterprise, furnishing ice for his household and for the sick of the neighborhood.

"Yes, yes!" he would say regretfully. "Several of the children are now gone. My first wife's son and daughter are married, and have their plantations near by; our girls are now all married, or teaching school. The older son of my second wife went into the Navy. One is employed in a dairy in Washington. *Our son* is in school; that is the youngest.

His cheery, jolly, intelligent face was always welcome. They were always glad to see his wiry, little person coming along the oak lined pasture, knowing there would be something interesting to tell so soon as he reached them. Although all the children were not living with him any more, the little partnership one, of his and his last wife, was, and the others came for a season now and then; he was never heard lamenting the loneliness of old people's lives.

He took life as it was meted out to him by the fates, and was liked for his individuality, and decided upright standard. Some persons wished he was not quite so upright in his decisions against intemperance and irreligious flights in his neighborhood, perhaps!

Every day a visit was paid to the old family burying ground and fresh flowers placed upon the new graves. When all the family came there together, the Major knelt there, and prayed "that God might enable them yet to endure the heavy burden of sorrow that the errors of his brothers had fastened upon them." Ah, how they all wept!

How vivid in their minds was a vision of that fine, handsome, brilliant, young man, shot down like a beast into the smothering dust! How they again saw this same man a nervous, pale wreck, lingering between life and death so long, that sometimes a breath of air might have released his soul, it seemed, and at last it went out like the flame of an exhausted, flickering candle, breaking all their hearts!

It may be that they could not always become

resigned to the burden, as it had been brought to them. Some sort of stiffened and hard look came over one or two of them, at least, like a taint of rebellion, as they arose and went forth from the hallowed ground. Perhaps the wife was thinking there should be no right allotted the human creature to lead men to the chance slaughter of a battlefield! It is a sensible belief.

The great excitement that flushes the covey of doves in a woodland hunt, it may be, resembles the excitement of a boy when the war drums have urged him to enlist, and which the poetic, romantic of life, christens patriotism. War is a priceless, exigency, at best. A humiliating one, it ought to be reckoned, as one to be well and earnestly considered.

The tangled thicket of shrubs, locusts, cedars, bluebells, yellow lilies, live-forever, daisies, asparagus, grasses and briar roses had been thinned out; only enough of them to be picturesque had been left. Of the briar roses and white alders and tall cedars, just a few. The vines clinging here and there were encouraged to still try to cover up the crumbling old walls of heavy stone. The ground myrtle or ivy was left before the new graves came, and was replaced nicely over them by the sexton and Alice, along with a clump of magnolias.

It was a grand spot! and now a very sacred, precious spot, from which to turn and leave one's soul-jewels!

These were sore experiences to their torn hearts; and they were glad to see the happy faces of the good neighbors, Mrs. Quinell or

"Will," as they now called him after Ned's manner of address to Mr. Quinell, when they returned from these visits to the shrine of their idol, out there in the myrtle vines.

Alice sketched the graves and the old burying ground, not long afterwards, while tree, vine and flower were at their best in the early summer. Alice was with her during the progress of both sketching and painting in the morning hours.

They had become indispensable to each other. Everything that entered the plans of one was embraced in those of the other young woman. Each knew the nature and opinions of the other perfectly. And many a time, when one was amused by some occurrence about them, of rather a ridiculous suggestion, they each knew better than to look towards the other, lest she laugh right out.



## XXI.

## THE BEACH—A DELAYED LETTER.

One morning soon after breakfast the young ladies of the Liscomb plantation told Pete to bring the phaeton out for them. They stopped at Mammy Nance's cabin to learn that she was much better. The granddaughter living with her said:

"Dat rheumatismus medicine done hope huh, an' she say thanky, ma'm!"

Rene sent in some delicacies, and the girl came out with plate and napkin, saying again and curtsying very low:

"Mammy Nance she say thanky, thanky, ma'm! She say yo' all's cookin' make 'er hongy once mo'. She wush to heah how Mistah Major comin' on."

Rene said: "He is pretty well to-day."

"Thanky, ma'm, yessum, thanky, ma'm!" And aside she said to Eliza, "Ah reckon mammy so'ta saterfied when Ah said thanky ma'm, thanky, ma'm, 'nough times."

Rene was laughing, "for," she said, "that extra thanky, ma'm, meant mo' if yo' all pleases: dess soon as yo' all kin."

The phaeton was at the door already when she and Alice returned to the house. They

drove over to Mr. Jonas Wilson's home, where two of the daughter teachers were passing their summer vacation. Here they were never obliged to be on formal terms with these old friends.

They soon adjourned to the garden to see what new plant or shrub had been added since they saw it last year. The mother had accompanied them, and she called out to her husband to join them.

"Cousin Jonas, you can tell the girls better than I can what you call the new bushes." She meant the botanical names.

Warmly shaking hands with the ladies from the neighboring plantation, he proceeded to tell what was required. Besides six new roses were some Cape Jasmine shrubs in full bloom.

"Now, my wife thinks most of the Jasmine. I don't; I say you cannot find any bit of silk or velvet fabric on earth to equal the color or the softness of these," and he touched his face to the roses.

Laughing, his wife said: "See him! He really loves them, I s'pose, Cousin Jonas, but come here and tell them what this one is called. The roses will let you go."

"That is the New Bridal Rose, a species of Tea Rose. Smell it, you'll see! And this almost black one, see!"

As they walked back to the house, the wife said, "Cousin Jonas, you must see the little chickens Miss Rene has painted! Why one could almost imagine that one could bury her nose in the fluffy down upon them!"

"Really, you thought them quite right?"

"Yes, Miss Rene, perfectly natural were the beautiful little things. And I want to tell you that mother hen is a direct descendant of the lonely old thing you found at your place the second day after the fire. I have her pedigree down fine. Don't laugh," she begged, as they all shrieked in merriment at the idea of going back so far.

"But, don't you want to copy the Jasmine and the new roses?" asked Mrs. Wilson, a little confused, and wondering if she really had got the pedigrees confused.

While at Cousin Jonas' home, they made up a plan to go to The Beach for a stay of a couple weeks, or a month, if they all liked it, and the parents were of the same mind. Cousin Jonas was to look after renting the cottage, which they intended to hire.

Not long afterwards, they had heard from an agent about the cottage, and soon had everything packed that they had found was not already in the cottage. The parents were really as pleased as children with the idea of an outing. The three servants were notified of the time of starting. Mammy Nance was not particularly needed, as she was never strong any more, but the Major said they could not go without her to give dignity to the old time Southern party. The real intent was to render her a kindness in her last days, of course.

Not a very long time was consumed in getting settled after arriving at The Beach. Not knowing exactly how to get provisions, they had

brought whatever they could ship, without too much inconvenience, from home, a considerable of which they wished to try, and liked well enough to try again, in most cases, again and again.

At first the party looked on at the lively scene of the bathers, thinking the thing a little absurd. They did not hold to the same opinion many days, however. First one, then another fell before the temptation of the rough old surf, and were just as gay as the gayest, in the water.

"Nobody can be sad or melancholy mixed up in that jolly crowd among the waves," declared Rene, devoted to the exercise.

"The release to the sore, enfevered nerves of the four mourners, if but a temporary one, is good for them, and I shall do all I can to encourage them in the indulgence so long as we stay here, wife," said Cousin Jonas, laughing heartily at something very lively Alice had just done.

They all abandoned themselves fully to the exhilarating and cooling influence of the surf bathing, so long as they remained at the beach. The evenings were even so well appreciated by them as they listened to the ravishing music *produced*, as Jonas said; the Liscombs said *rendered*, by the Hungarian Band, in their gipsy form of passionate expression.

And old Mammy Nance had so recuperated that she forgot the pangs of rheumatism, and took on a new lease of life. 'Lizbeth and Eliza thought life here fine.

To the parents of Alice and Rene often came

a vision of Ostend, in that far away country when Ned was with them; of the many, many such places they had seen in the long tour they had made, for his sake particularly, came for a few sad, fleeting moments to them. To all of the four of them, the adorable music brought sad but sweet memories of his sublime love of music, and of his talent, too, for it. He was always with them.

All things concerning the dear one of their heart's best love were fast becoming sanctified, and when they listened now to the music he had loved, they felt they were adoring him through its glorious chords, its impassioned rhapsodies, and were devoutly glorified through it!

"Let us take our farewell tour upon a steamer to-day, for I fear weather to prevent it is in the air," proposed the Major one morning.

"Well, we have had a lovely outing, and I suppose we must return home to sit around embroidering, and embroidering our eyes out! I am going to begin again the lessons I was giving the children of the blacks. It will be some diversion to hear their funny attempts at A, B, C, D, and hear their tired sighs over the difficult lesson, and to see their triumphal taking on airs when they can read," and Rene laughed a little at the remembrance of the little earnest black faces.

"I am sorry to go," said Alice. "The ladies at the hotel have been so polite, genial and nice to us," also said each one.

"And let me say," said Mrs. Jonas, "that old lady in the brown cottage has been pleasant



company for us two old women," pointing to Mrs. Liscomb and herself, when we did not want to go tramping with the girls, and the others from the hotel. "'Deed they have been right much company for us many a time! She has promised us a visit some day."

The Wilson girls, the double cousins, were "sorry to leave so much fun, so many jolly people, such grand music and the good menu, to take up teaching again."

The two gentlemen cared little how long they remained away from home, for each of them had rented out their acres to well known tenants, who now boarded themselves and would pay rent with such and such a number of bales of cotton, a little tobacco and corn, with plenty of field peas.

A last steamboat excursion, a last wallow in the sea, a siege of packing up, and the Liscomb-Wilson cottage was locked up behind them by the agent, who had rented it to them.

Arriving at the plantation, the family was a little surprised to find very few black people about. The fruits were dropping about, rotting. The tomatoes were lost to use by neglect; no beans nor peas had been canned. No late turnips worth speaking of, for winter, and for next spring's salad had been planted. The onion crop had been put away early.

As Major Liscomb looked upon all this, his wrath was gathering force, and, as in the old slavery days, he felt like gathering a hickory gad and sending a man out to lay on a few lashes. But, alas, he could not, as the present

day régime had abolished the practice. Seeing the surprise, 'Lizbeth suggested:

"De niggas done gone 'way to meetin' ovah to de Quinell chu'ch, Ah specs. Dis is de time a yeah dey has de Augus' meetin's; yo' all mem-bahs, Ah reckons."

Sure enough, the faint sounds of their shouting were blown over the intervening miles during the silent hours of the most of the long night. A few of the families were at home the next morning to prepare baskets of eatables to be "toted ovah to Marster Will's," meaning the church he had permitted them to build on his plantation. On the same acres also stood a frame school house where the future black man received his first impressions of learning from a very pompous and important black teacher.

Peeping into a coop that seemed to shelter chickens one day, Alice discovered a fine brood of fluffy little things that Mammy Nance had just brought from a nest under the meat house. It was a treasure for art work. Turning to Rene, she called her to come back, saying,

"Sister Rene, don't you want to give me that lesson in painting little chickens? for I don't imagine there will be many more opportunities. The frost will chill the little darlings, and they will be crying and ugly."

"Well, say, we will paint them to-morrow," said Rene. "What a beautiful group indeed, and so soft and sweet!"

"Yes, I'm sure I never saw a more beautiful group." They both took up a handful and caressed them.

They were tramping about the old Château, which had once been their home for over a year, and then had been the dining hall for the blacks a long time, and was now used as a ginning mill and packing house again. One apartment had always been used as storage and safety house. Having a metal inside wall and two locks, one a strong padlock on a heavy oaken door.

Loitering and aimlessly roaming about one day, it occurred to Alice to influence Rene to open the box containing the bridal silver. At first she was inclined to still leave it undisturbed, but finally consented, exclaiming, however:

"Who has the key? I'm sure I do not know, so, unless you can influence the door to open itself by saying to it as we used to do after we had absorbed Arabian Nights, 'Open Sesame,' I suppose that old storage apartment will still keep its secrets. In fact, I'm not sure where they put the box when we left the Château.

"I'll get the two keys if you are willing we should open your box." She went to Major Liscomb's apartments, and soon joined Alice, where she had seated herself in the swing under an oak near by.

This time they brought 'Lizbeth and Eliza to carry the box up to the house, and to pull out the nails from the top of it. This done, the women went to their quarters to finish the large ironing on hand.

"It was not so painful a task as Rene had always imagined it would be. A slight irritation of temper curiously took possession of her, rather than pain. And she overhauled them with

a little curiosity, perhaps, for she had really forgotten what the pieces positively were, how many and from whom they had been received, as it was her mother who had taken charge of them and packed them away out of her sight, after the luckless morning of Budd Stone's disappearance.

They decided to put them on a high shelf of the china closet, that they might be used if needed, as they had found themselves in need of more such things the evening they had given their reception and musicale, as a house warming. It was deemed foolish to be short of things they had packed away. The ice pitcher being left in easy reach to use all the time. The maid Eliza was called in to carry out the excelsior or packing shavings and other débris on the floor.

Alice went to her own room, when the work was finished, pleased that Sister Rene, as she had always called her since her marriage to Ned, was forgetting the unfortunate affair with Budd Stone. But the sight of the silver mementoes had brought some things vividly back to her mind.

It was in the room where all this silver was spread out, that he, her beloved, and she had pledged themselves to marry. So the sight of these mute witnesses in Rene's room had brought back the event, and the realization of all the wretched tragedies befallen the family since that night of their betrothal. First was Sister Rene's great sorrow!

The peril of death many times pending over her betrothed; the final shot that ruined his life,

the tragic death at last! She wept many hours alone in her room.

It was good that she did not know what convulsive, overwhelming grief had shaken her Sister Rene's soul, even at this very hour in the loneliness of her chamber. She could not have comprehended the unspeakable anguish she had given herself out to during the whole night as she lay there alone trying to solve the mystery she had just been entangled in.

It was all through an old letter in that silver ice pitcher she and Rene had chanced to keep near at hand for every day use. Opening the pitcher to receive the fresh ice and water the maid had just brought; she bade her wash it, but saw and secured the old missive, believing it one that had been overlooked in her bonfire of Captain Stone's letters, for it was surely his well known writing.

She soon saw that the letter had never been opened. She also saw that the postmark was New York City, and the date several years back, standing out plainly on the envelope. On its back also very distinctly, was the date it had been received at the town near by, where all their mail was delivered to them or to the colored man they sent for it.

Now who could have got that letter and put it into the ice pitcher, instead of delivering it to her? where it had lain these long, long years, even under fire, in the old wine cellar; and then was stored away in the old gin and packing house yet two years longer! Ah, yes, her mother



had packed it all away to save her sorrow. What sorrow that oversight had now put upon her!

The letter read:

"MY DEAR MISS IRENE:—

"As a sorrowful, penitent man, I write to explain a circumstance most harrowing to my soul! I shall relate a true story, no matter how humiliating it is to me, and trust you to judge of me according to your divinely sweet nature.

"As I rode home from your house the night before our nuptials were to be celebrated, I was assailed by a woman, indeed an actress with whom I had had an entanglement two years before while at college up North. What I thought only a student's frolic, while under the influence of drink, turned out a marriage, according to the laws of the State we were in at the time.

"I did not live with her, for in that very hour she had to travel West with her company. In a short time I read in several newspapers of an accident to a railroad coach, in which several of their company and this woman were reported killed. I made no investigation, not caring to advertise my nonsensical lark with the actress. She was dead; that was all I knew then.

"The next year I went to my Uncle Nathaniel's, South, and met the woman I have adored ever since. I hardly believe that the girl thought of the mock marriage at the time with a particle of earnestness, for we never even corresponded, and I never thought of it more than the play they had just enacted on the stage.

"Well, she accosted me that night, as I rode home, in a great rage, saying that I was law-

fully married to her and she intended to proclaim it to-morrow at the Liscomb home, unless I abandoned the marriage with you.

"Ashamed, dazed, I hurried North to get her out of the neighborhood, discovering, en route, that she was certainly a victim to dementia, but the circumstance of the lark was against me, I know; so, with her friends, I put her into an asylum. In a short time she escaped and drowned herself in the Hudson!

"I went to the house of these relatives and saw her buried by them. You have the embarrassing sad story. Can you forgive me? I am more the creature of unfortunate circumstances than the responsible criminal, and I hope you see it.

"If you can forgive me, write me just one word. Only say you forgive, even if you cannot be a friend, nor ever care to see me again.

"If you cannot, silence will be the sign of your cruel sentence. As ever,

"BUDD STONE.

"Address No. 6750 John St., New York."

## XXII.

## RENEWED GRIEF—THE CERCLE.

The contents of the letter almost dazed Rene; and how it ever came in the pitcher was very puzzling. It was amazing that any one could have packed away the silver without looking into the covered pieces! Yet she was quite certain her mother had never seen it, for if she had, and did not want her to see it, she certainly would have burned it. One could see that the letter had never been opened, and her mother had not seen it; there could be no doubt about it.

She again read the dates. Over and over she read them. Oh, heavens! It was so many years ago—ten long, wretched years. She tried to remember the period, or something that may have happened in June, seven years before, when the letter was brought to the house. She was so shaken with different emotions that she could hardly think clearly at all.

She looked at the post mark outside again. "Yes, it was June, but I've found it at last; it was June the fifteenth. Where was I June the fifteenth—seven years ago?"

Thinking and puzzling a long time; utterly bewildered, she groped about, till suddenly a certain house party—"Yes, Annie Miller's house

party it was! Well, I suppose that house maid we had then brought the letter from town, and put it in the pitcher because I was away and never thought of it again."

"O, yes, I understand it now. Mother had the silver cleaned while I was away, and when it was brought back to my room it must have stood upon my dressing table till mother chose to pack it away again in the little dark closet off my room. Then the maid put the letter in the pitcher for safe keeping, meaning of course to deliver it to me.

"Then, mother decided to pack all our silver in boxes, to be convenient for hiding, in case the battles might come over to our part of the country. The maid never thought of that letter, I'm sure, for it was about that time the niggers found out that they might be set free by the Yankees, and did not know what they were about from that time on. That is the whole mystery."

But the fact remained. She was eternally separated from her lover now! "All this seven years he has been thinking me cruel, unforgiving! Why, he has not been so very wicked after all!" and she re-read the letter.

She had thought all love for him quite subdued. But she found it not true. And now she never should be reconciled again! Never be quite indifferent. It was finished by this last stroke: Her happiness had fled forever! Perhaps he is dead, or married!"

So she had tormented herself the whole miserable night through, and wondered if it could be

possible they might meet "Some time, somewhere!"

Both sisters were ailing next day. Rene could not raise her head, because of the pain in it. She thought much about the thing revealed to her. Now she knew he had loved her a year after their separation. That was something. But now? "O, when he has believed me cruel and unforgiving—who knows what has befallen him? I know his ardent nature."

She decided to tell nobody of it, for all was beyond the help of anyone. Only an accident of a most astounding sort could change affairs, and she must wait till "Some time, somewhere."

The more she tried to reconcile herself to the state of things, the more she felt that hope coming into her heart. And she tried to encourage it. She must meet him "Some time, somewhere!"

When Alice heard that Rene was unable to appear at breakfast, she made an effort to go to her, and after her coffee went to her room. She comprehended that Rene had been suffering. She thought, of course, that the sight of the silverware had aroused some old and painful reminiscences, but was astonished at the way it had broken her spirits and changed her looks.

Faithful to her decision, Rene never told the thing she had found out. She could not talk of it, and above all things she could not have the affair resurrected and talked over by others, though it might lift a slight cloud from over her standing in the community. Still, it would bring



more contempt and criticism upon Captain Budd Stone.

Alice sat with Rene the greater part of the day. Reading letters to her that had just arrived. Answering a couple that could not wait till she was well enough to write. And reading from a favorite poet, till the monotony of her smooth, musical tones induced sleep. Then she went for a walk on the great lawn, under the glorious oaks and met the two faithful friends, Mrs. and Mr. Quinell, coming in the dear little phaeton.

She was a tall, thin, rather blond woman, with a child's pale blue eyes and light hair, a frank sunny nature, and a hand always ready to lead a friend over rough places. She was glad of her husband's friendship for the Liscombs. He was hardly so tall; a slender, shapely, boyish sort of a man; "only," as his wife said, "for the Scottish vein in him that kept him straight." His very black hair and very blue eyes were constantly puzzling new acquaintances as to how a Southerner could have such contradictory features. He was spirited, and liked to be in company with lively people. So, when with Ned's wife, he tried to amuse her. With Rene he always pretended to have a flirtation. His wife said:

"I'm not afraid of their flirtation; Rene is his match, and she gets just as much fun out of their nonsense as he does. Let them flirt! Neither one could fall in love with the other. I am always on hand, to chill any such ardour as

sometimes springs up between the married and the unmarried."

"Now, don't be too sure," said the jolly husband. "Love sometimes surmounts colossal difficulties. Witness, for instance, how I converted your father."

So sped the days and the months were soon trundling after them, with only the passing away of a few more of the old landmarks from time to time. One morning, Luce, the granddaughter of Mammy Nance, came running towards the "big house" with eyes protruding from their sockets, crying:

"Mammy is daid! Mammy is daid!" at every jump.

"Why, Luce!" said Rene, who had run out to see what was the sensation. "When did she pass away?"

"Ah cain't tell, sho! She done daid when Ah fotch huh coffee an' co'nbread. Ah say 'Mammy, hain't yo' done slep' 'nough 'thout my waitin' no mo'?' She say nothin'. She daid!" and Luce sobbed lustily.

Next day all the Liscomb family went to take leave of Mammy Nance forever! Her remains were put away in the new cemetery on Will Quinell's plantation, back of the church and school house that he had permitted them to have, ever since he took the Stone's plantation. Her grave was graced with the very first tombstone in the new burial ground of the Negro congregation there. Her old "Marster and Mistress" gave it. And they often sent flowers, by Luce, for her grave. Occasionally the four of the

family paid a visit to the faithful old woman's grave that Fall. Ground ivy was soon growing all over the brown or red clay of the fresh grave.

Luce took a place as house-maid in the living house of the Major.

About this time the Quinells invited the young ladies from the Liscomb plantation to join them in a call on the new teacher at the Cross Roads schoolhouse. So they came with the surry on Saturday afternoon to carry them over about three miles to the house where board had been secured for this teacher. They passed the neatest, tiniest cabin one could imagine used for human habitation as they journeyed over their way.

It was a temptation the girls could not resist that seized them to alight and go peep in the windows of this cozy, "cute" little structure where the new teacher taught her eight pupils.

It had been built in a grove of most perfect oaks and had a windlass above the well curb which was wound up by a one-time carriage wheel instead of the usual dangerous handle on windlasses. They saw an excellent open fireplace and very comfortably shaped seats in their survey of the school house for the white children of the neighborhood. Then continued on to the house near by.

During the call they discovered that the new teacher had some knowledge of German, French and music. They were delighted and invited her to join them in a *Cercle* for the practice of their accomplishments. They set the next Saturday for their exercise and the Sunday following for

a visit with them. The family she lived with should join if they wished. They could not come. But the Quinell family could come on the Saturday afternoon following the first one.

The days of the week soon fled and Saturday afternoon brought Miss Walton for her return visits to the Liscombs and a revival of their accomplishments, for the weather might prevent frequent meetings of this tiny circle of students, and they were all eager to begin. Major and Mrs. Liscomb were introduced finally, and the old wife accepted an invitation to join the French exercise.

There was a lot of merriment over the mistakes of the unpractised class, but "Mother held her own" with the younger ones, the girls all declared. After French, they had a wrestle with German for an hour. Then a walk down to the Springs near the old Château. The supper over, their musicale was begun, with the Quinells and one of their cousins to assist. They enjoyed it.

Each soon found out about the rate of music the other was capable of, and so arranged for their next meeting and study. Quinell played the flute. They meant to make a social event of the *Cercles*, and planned to bring together others of the vicinity. Miss Walton had studied abroad also at a German city where she had relatives.

Happiness was gradually being lured once more to the plantation. Even Rene was seeming quite content. The Major seemed, however, to be growing feebler, and behind his back it was admitted sometimes "that he took little interest

in passing events, even growing hard of hearing and cross."

The meetings for mutual practice became a regular Saturday's event. And they experienced some improvement. Miss Walton was pronounced an interesting addition to the Cross Roads Society. She and the Liscombs undertook to relate simple occurrences they had experienced abroad, in French or German, and which was a "grand coup" in learning continued conversation.

It was an amusing hour in which the orchestra essayed to play all their parts together, and more laughing than playing was done. But the piano, the violin, the flute did marvellously well to keep in the same measure many times. Mrs. Liscomb was created musical critic before a piece was introduced to their public audiences.

About the middle of the week the two sisters Liscomb often had an hour or so of reminiscences alone. They would pick up a thread here and there of operas heard at different times and places; their musical tastes and judgments ran rather parallel. So, if one of them struck a certain song, or a certain strain only of an opera, the other caught on at once, and it was played together until it was exhausted of its novelty.

So, it would continue until one or the other went on, improvising and reminiscing alone, as Alice expressed it, "World without end, Amen!" One of them generally knew to what fields the other had gone in her reflections by the romance or sorrow her notes sang.

Alice so understood "Sister Rene" that she



could read the notes her violin rendered any time. If they were of a grieving and pathetic, low voiced sort, she remained away from her till her melancholy had subsided. Ah, why should these two not understand each other? Both had about equally suffered in life's sorrows.

The late fall and winter were passed in this social and studious way, and by painting pictures of snow, or "Icicle Scenes," as some were, in reality. A visit to town when some revival in the church interested them was once or twice indulged in, too. Guests came home with them for a few days at such seasons. It was hard to live over the holidays. Harder than all other of the anniversaries, perhaps. Especially was it so for the older ones. They thought every recurrence might be the last for them upon earth. They lived over the joys of the children, too, at these other times. To the younger ones there was not time for this sort of reflections, as they were occupied too closely with the present.

They all went together, however, on Christmas morning to weep and pray over Ned's and Mrs. Wood's graves. Indeed it was only a few minutes past twelve o'clock in the night when they draped themselves very warmly, and silently took their way to the dear old family burial ground. They carried mistletoe and holly, made up into anchors, and wreaths for each of the new graves. And there in the brightest moonlight, the coldest of frozen snow, they all knelt close together at the side of Ned's grave. Too overcome with various emotions, the feeble old man spoke no

word for some minutes. All of them wept and sobbed aloud above their idol.

At last, the prayer came in agonized expression and passionate appeal.

"O, Thou who wast striped and crucified; Thou understandest our supreme grief at this hour! Give us grace to forgive them who have made such desolation all over the whole land! Mothers, fathers and children mourn without consolation to-night, under Thy holy and celestial light. Hear us—hear us, forgive, O, forgive them, for they know not what they did; not even more than they knew when they crucified Thee. Endow our broken hearts with forgiveness the short time we must bear our grief! And give us to meet him we mourn. Amen!"

It was a weird, solemn scene. The four figures, in deep black, convulsed with passionate weeping, kneeling above the cold, snow-draped grave; now, glittering in the heartless moonlight like marble! Rising from her knees the first one, Rene tenderly helped each one of the others up and led them away from the dear grave to that of Alice's mother. They knelt with her here, while Alice made a short and fervent prayer above the grave of her loved one.

The day was spent by them much as the others of their vicinity passed it. Church in the morning. Dinner with friends, and these friends were Ned's favorites, who had insisted on having the pleasure of their company in an earnest way. Their talk was very much about Ned. Will Quinell related lively things he and Ned had done at a Christmas in the past, when they had

returned home together for the holiday festivities. It seemed they must talk of him!

Back at the plantation the Major had given liberally to the blacks of everything to make them a rich and joyful festival. The old Château was not too full of cotton but that they could dine in it. The Pickaninnies were all well remembered, too.

Next morning the family came together at the usual breakfast hour.

"We have had a fine time and a grand dinner, I say," said Rene, "and the drive home in the beautiful moonlight was simply enchanting!"

"Wasn't it?" responded Alice. "I was thinking if one could only have painted it. The Quinells were so pleased that we went to their beautiful dinner! And perfectly delighted with the gifts we had sent over the eve before. I saw him wipe his eyes every time he looked upon that hunting outfit of Ned's, we sent him. And his wife was proud of her ring."

"Let us go down to the Château and see if the kids got, each one, his share of clothing we laid out for him!"

## XXIII.

## MID-WINTER—DESPAIR.

It was mid-winter in Chicago, and the snow lay in piles as high as a man's head on the edges of the streets and sidewalks, on the West Side. The wind had blown hard all day and all night. Down towards the lake it was much worse. People said of it, "Why, it will lift you out of your boots!"

The gas still burned in the street lamps on West Madison Street, but about all lights had been extinguished a long time in the dwelling houses, except a kerosene lamp in a new wooden, two-storied house. In the living rooms, upstairs, was this lamp and a woman sat sewing there.

Below was a business room occupied as a Sewing Machine Office, a Pattern store and a place where one could get Stamping Done to Order.

This place was kept by a widow who was gradually sending piece by piece of her furniture to be sold at a second hand store down town. For she needed the money to help feed her three children until she learned how to add enough sorts of businesses to her store to support them.

The late husband had been a champion billiard

player, never thinking of laying a bit aside for a rainy day. One day he fell dead with a cue in his hand. The wife had no accomplishments whereby to gain a livelihood. So friends of his supplied a few months' rent of this cheap business room. Lately there had appeared another announcement card alongside the sewing machine and showy trimmed dress pattern of thin paper, saying in very awkward and irregular lettering,

### SEWING AND EMBROIDERY WANTED.

The large front show window was now pretty well filled and began to put on a sort of a business air "sure enough," as they said in the neighborhood.

Now the widow could not sew worth speaking of. She could hardly keep the ragged garments of her little brood decently mended and sewn together. But she was learning business methods quite rapidly. She took in the work and let it out to others at a certain per cent. of the price. But in the living rooms above was a more practiced seamstress, who, being new to Chicago, very much wanted this work for herself. She did conscientiously neat work, and so soon as it was known in that vicinity, she had more work than she could do without working often, all night. She began with embroidery; that did not pay. So she took any kind of sewing that came to hand, even dressmaking.

She had little time to bestow in acquiring the art, and tortured herself seriously to master the



degree necessary to its accomplishment. Her family took so much of her time. It was her kerosene lamp so often seen in this West Side flat late into the night.

It was an awfully hard undertaking she was engaged in; this doing her household duties and caring for the two small children. Every bit of cooking for the four in family was a part of the task. The boy, nearly two years old, was now ill. She had not been able to catch up with the orders she had on hand, although she had worked nearly all night for some time. She felt worn out.

To-night the child had been particularly troublesome; his ailment growing alarmingly like pneumonia. Almost beside herself with the anxiety, the overwork, not alone of the last months, but of several hard cruel years, she could hardly hold up her head or keep her eyes open. It was nearly two o'clock in the morning when she had succeeded in quieting his suffering, and getting him to sleep. The wood for the only fire she could afford was nearly burned up, and how to get more was now bothering her, for it would be so dear in such cold weather! And the price was not yet earned. She put another cover over the little daughter, a child of four years, and looked up her sewing, groaning from pain.

Half dead for want of sleep and from weariness, she set to work, instead of snatching the sleep she so much needed while the little ones slept!

"O, God, I shall die of my burdens! Is there

no help for me? I would give hundreds of dollars if I had it, just to sleep a little."

She could not see her stitches. She turned the light up. It was no use! It was no use!

Suddenly she sprang to her feet exclaiming: "It was on my hand! That horrible worm!" She shuddered with fright and looked about her, afraid to move, so sure was she of its presence. With bulging eyes, she searched for it. Where could it have gone?

Growing a little calmer, it slowly dawned upon her mind that no such worm could be living in a Chicago winter, as cold as the present one, nor be in their clean apartment.

"Ah, I am crazy. That is it! No wonder I am a little mad! Of course that vision of a hideous, long, bristling thick worm crawling slowly over my hand was an illusion!" But she held her hand close to the smoky, odorous lamp and passed the other one over it, to see if she could detect its footprints in the pale, limp flesh.

"No, indeed, the only wonder would be if I did not go mad! Sorrow, the shame of drunkenness, overwork, child bearing, insomnia! And now, my child at the point of death, no food, no wood; work in the house that I cannot finish. Why don't Joseph come! He has become such a liar from drink, that I don't know whether he is seeking work, or lying dead drunk in the back room of some saloon, where they will rob him of the last cent I loaned him to go to answer advertisements in the Times."

She had laid aside the work to try to sleep. It was utterly impossible! She was thoroughly

broken down, and was hysterically weeping, but sleep would never come again! That is the way she felt. She had been in this nervous condition for a long time. Her brain felt as if it had become melted from the unending fever in it!

Her unskilled efforts to do dressmaking seemed a mountain on her sore brain. She would worry for hours sometimes to determine if a ruffle should be bias or straight of the material; should it be stitched with the machine, or (she had rented one of the widow down stairs) blind stitched by hand?

So the tortured mind of the hopeless Annie Wood had been humiliated, worn threadbare by the coarse, brutal drunkenness of the man she had married in defiance of parental advice, and the judgment of friends. She was beginning to see that reform was out of the question. Will power, the little he was naturally possessed of, had gone down forever before the brain havoc wrought by alcohol! He did not even talk of it. He was morally discouraged and hopeless himself.

In the first years of the disease, he believed he could drink or not drink as he wanted to. Now he did not want to leave it off. Perhaps slow paresis had set in; certainly no human brain could ever quite recover its functions after the abuse Joseph Wood had put upon this poor organ.

At daylight the sick child woke in a dying condition. Annie ran to a drug store over the way and left a call for a physician.

Her relatives South did not know to what

depths her husband had sunk. She had not written any of them for several years, fearing they would only gloat over her woes. She had learned better than to expect anything of anybody, when she had a great, lazy, drunken husband at her side. Let him support his children himself is always the decision in such matters, and Annie Miller Wood was very certain never to leave the decision to her relatives, nor to former friends. "One can't count on the friends of fair weather to spring to her help in days of misfortune," Annie declared without asking anything whatever of them.

She had changed places of residence so often to please Joseph, to help him cut old drink friends, that none of her earlier acquaintances could have found her if they had wished to, and they certainly had not the slightest inclination to trouble themselves about it.

Tardily the summons for the doctor was answered. He did what he could perhaps; but it was beyond his skill to save the boy, and the light of his pure, feeble life went out!

At this moment the stupid father arrived at their clean little flat, from his futile "search for employment," as he claimed, 'though the hour, and his red, swollen face plainly suggested a prolonged drinking bout, out of reach of his wife's eternal nagging, as he termed her eloquent entreaties and arguments in favor of sobriety.

He was at the point, in sobering up, of hysteria. So weeping and repenting came fluently and abundantly! He knelt by the dead child in

anguish of spirit, unmistakably suffering torments of soul! He vowed to his Maker never to touch drink again, calling the spirit of the child to witness the vow!

The physician soon understood the situation, and because the child's father had served in the army felt a tolerant pity for him. He had often said in his life of practice of medicine, "It was only a wonder that any men were sober or temperate men, for the masterful temptation beckoned from every square, almost, in the city!"

"Who was to remedy the thing?"

Every week of his life he met such sights! He needed not one word of explanation. He fathomed the unspeakable agony of the mother's heart, though no word of complaint escaped her, nor one tear fell from her eyes. Her sorrow was beyond words or tears. She thought the end had come and she must die!

The physician brought his wife during the morning, for he had learned the Woods were strangers in the West. She found Mrs. Wood packing her remaining valuables to send to a second hand store down town. The marbles the Liscombs had sent her as bridal gifts the doctor halted and sent them to an art salesroom where they would bring a better price. The watch, chain, bracelets and brooch and the Dresden clock and vases were put on sale in appropriate places!

The doctor's wife found there was dearth of everything to live on in the house. She found, too, that in a short time another would come to take the place of the dead one, therefore let the



things go on sale, knowing how badly money would be needed when these tired hands of the mother would have to rest a few days in enforced idleness, and at much expense.

She had often met worse cases in her slum work for her church in the city; and many, many of this same sort. Women by thousands were grovelling in the mire and slime of intemperance, struggling with unbearable crosses over the bottomless sewers that alcohol had dug!

"O, God! Who is to remedy the wrong?" and she and thousands of good people cried out the same despairing words always. The same cry will forever be rending the air while mankind are the wretched, helpless, brain-sick victims of drink. Joseph Wood could not have been restored to health and reason by any power, earthly or heavenly, now.

He seemed to feel no responsibility whatever. He was too ill, indeed. He was only sensible to his own intolerable suffering from the late spree he was trying to pull through.

Turning away from the dead baby, he caught sight of the small flask of whiskey some neighbor had rushed over with when the news flew round the few neighbors that knew them.

"Baby Wood is dying!"

He saw it! and stealthily carried it out of the chamber of death, and to still his maddening remorse and pain, drank half of it. And just before the little white coffin started out to Graceland Cemetery, he drank the other half!

By the time the hearse and the two buggies reached Graceland, Joseph Wood was stagger-

ing drunk.. It took very little alcohol to put him in that condition. Annie could not put her hand into his bended arm. It was wholly impossible. So she stood beside him at the open grave.

He was bent over with overwhelming expression of grief. The little girl did not understand the strange thing being enacted, and looked with wide open eyes at her awful looking father, then in the grave where the pretty white box, with a single rose upon it, was slowly let down into the big hole! The eyes of the mother were dry as powder. She could not have wept if they were putting the other child away also! Madness was certainly pending, for to her the scene was absurd, ironic! Afterwards she tried to remember about the burial. She remembered all the preacher said, and how ridiculous it seemed to her! Then somebody seemed to be carrying her to the carriage with tears streaming from his eyes.

Arriving home it suddenly came upon her that her baby was gone—gone forever! and the flood gates were opened, and tears, tears flowed for hours. She was utterly broken down and believed all was over; she could go no further! But good Christian women came to see her, led her along the dreary way yet a little while.

Some very senseless advisers urged her to go to her friends, if she had any, in view of the unspeakable thing yet pending over her.

"I have no friends to go to. There is no one to undertake me and my woes. I cannot leave my husband, for he is now beyond help, and I must care for him. No!" she said shortly, "I

will not desert him!" This sort of friends deserted her, glad to shirk a little charity they thought they scented. A good place to stop, they thought.

Next morning, before it was daylight, Joseph woke, racked with a consuming thirst! He always coughed and cleared his throat loudly, no matter what hour of the night it might be, or if he woke the sick in the house or the enfevered wife. So now he coughed, cleared his throat and thought much. It was too early to get into any drink saloon near by. The wife was at last sleeping. It was a pity to disturb her by getting up and out of the house, but somebody was on the sidewalk over the street now. "Yes, it's Joe, the bartender, opening up the saloon diagonally over the way." He hurried out of bed, saying:

"Guess Annie's slept 'nough by this time. Can't help it if she haint. She has to make it up some other time!"

He was soon shutting the door with a bang; he did not know they ever shut without a bang! Annie called loudly, "Joseph, wait for coffee. I will have it in a minute." He hurried down stairs. He was suffering the torments of the damned for a drink and curtly ordered the man who was sweeping out the drink hall:

"Gimme something quick; my wife was ill all night and I've had to take care of her; haint slept at all."

The fellow kept on sweeping, uncertain about giving it to him, for he owed a bill there already.

"Been up all night with sick wife. D'ye hear?"

"Sick wife! Hell!" contemptuously muttered the man as he dropped the broom to serve him. Wood went home; ate the remnant of food that had been left on a tray of food, sent in on the day of the funeral and slept until noon.

## XXIV.

## JOSEPH WOOD—SAME OLD STORY.

Sometimes lately, Joseph Wood came home with money in his possession, and his wife was at a loss to know how he had come by it. He would not tell her. She began to suspect that he got it in some gambling game. When that was suggested, he stammered out something like, "Well, whose business is it?"

Then it would just as mysteriously disappear, which seemed to confirm the gambling theory, and he wanted her to believe it.

One day he lay sleeping upon the couch, after imbibing rather freely and some coins were about to roll out of his pocket. Annie investigated the amount he had, and put it away to help pay the rent, soon due, knowing well that he could not hold on to the six dollars very long. So soon as he woke, he went over to the saloon to get a drink, for he was miserably thirsty for it.

He came immediately back and looked on the couch, under it and sat down to think the mysterious disappearance over. Turning to her, he asked,

"Annie, did you take money out of my pocket this afternoon?"



Not wishing to lie outright, she acknowledged it, begging him to let her keep it to pay off the rent or other debts of which she began an enumeration.

"Give it to me!" he demanded roughly. "Can't a man have a little money 'thout his wife goin' through his pockets, I'd like to know! Give me that money!"

She essayed coaxing, "Please Joseph, leave most of it here; you know how pickpockets rob people in Chicago."

He knew she meant the idle hangers-on of saloons; and he felt smart enough for that gang! He was pretty rich to-day; hadn't had so much cold cash for a long time; was consequently brave!

"Where's that money? Give it here!"

Annie went to the bureau and got all of it but a dollar for him. He was cunning enough to suspect her and growled out: "You've kept half of it!"

He went out, banging the door very hard this time, and muttering:

"You danged rebel's brat! I'll get even with you, I'll bet you!"

Turning to go to her work again, she caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror, as she passed it, and she angrily addressed it, menacingly almost, in fact.

"And you pity and live with such a man, Annie Miller?"

The old answer, always ready for the drunkard's wife, seemed to hiss back at her in derision,

"How are you going to help it? Say, who

will take you and your child, and your pending woes now?"

"Sure enough! Sure enough, who?" she responded aloud to the taunt, and settled down again to her sewing. Endeavoring, with might and main, to be patient a while longer, but always thinking, dreading the horrible risk of her life before her, from which there was no turning back! And which risk might leave her darling, beautiful daughter an orphan. Ah, worse than a full orphan!

"God, help me! God help me!" she was always praying. There seemed none other now, and surely He would hear her! "But his laws are unalterable; it may be, He cannot!" She doubted if she could be patient much longer. But for the little girl, she would not try. She would die! A very strong temptation crossed her mind.

The little four-year-old in the other room was very busy, with the forbidden scissors in her hand, cutting to tiny bits the last new fashion plates, priceless treasures of the wretched amateur dressmaker, her mother, in the front room. It was fine fun for the lonely child.

Mrs. Wood was planning while she worked. Her last scheme was to take an apprentice to dressmaking, though she herself was but a novice at the very difficult business. The little widow down stairs soon got one for her, besides a better seamstress, to help finish the accumulated work on hand.

With the new help, the last of the work was soon finished, and sent to the room below. Now

the dull time for dressmaking had come, and Annie was glad of the relief, for she had a large order already in for a bride's linens. Dainty thin linen, thicker linen, laces and embroideries. Annie excelled at such work, and she was greatly prepossessed with the beautiful bride.

"White work" did not pay so well as dress-making, but for exhausted sight and senses it was certainly a good thing for Annie Wood; and the bride had acquiesced in the extraordinary price the widow had proposed, in her real ignorance of the usual rates. She was learning business methods rapidly. She soon caught on to the fact that some women like to be gouged, and soon had a rich and reckless clientele. Delightful indeed!

Mrs. Wood was unfortunately afflicted with a felon on the forefinger of her right hand, which made difficult work. Being so awkward, with it poulticed up, one morning she had given it an awful and painful blow. Before she could quiet the pain, the bride-to-be came in to try on the garments that were ready. Alas, they had to be altered! That meant a lot of work, and that throbbing finger was already setting the miserable Annie wild. She wept, much to her embarrassment, from the discouragement she felt at the loss of time that implied, to say nothing of the pain she was undergoing in the process of fitting the garments.

The lovely bride-to-be stepped up to her, and putting her arm around her, her face near to hers, said to her softly and kindly:

"Don't worry, Mrs. Wood. I shall make the

price up to you in the final bill. I have always seen that you were a lady, and you have had my particular sympathy since I met you. I understand your situation perfectly. Let me tell you something. I sewed for two years, and know how hard it is. I should be sewing for my living to-day, but for a decision of the courts which gave me a large property, once decided against me. So you see, I comprehended the accidents of life that render it hard or easy for women, don't you see it?"

"Ah, yes! The game of life is a chance game indeed, I know it well! I thank you for your kind words," said Annie, loving her exceedingly. She seemed the most lovable, beautiful person she had ever met. Annie went on with the tedious work with a lighter heart. "If only all rich women were so sensible, so very thoughtful, so kind!" she kept thinking, "why the world would not seem so dreary to working people!"

The dainty bridal suits were at last finished; the price paid in, and alas, immediately paid out, on bills long due! The arbiter of the beautiful things having a few minutes, took up a newspaper to see if anything specially interesting had occurred in the last few days, when she was rushing the last pieces through. It was to her a rare treat to be able to read a bit. This paper had been brought to the house wrapped about some laundry work and Annie had put it aside for her leisure moments.

Scanning the first page she saw, she was vastly surprised to see her own name in the list of the uncalled for letters of the previous week.

She meant to send the apprentice girl for it, but learned that she would better call for it herself.

Making the long street car journey, she nervously hastened to the Post Office, to find that she must be identified by some one known at the office.

"That is the rule, madam!" and the clerk turned away from the delivery window.

Greatly disappointed, she was considering what a vexatious long time it would yet be before she could find out where the letter came from and what it contained. By this time she was standing by a show window of a notion store, and noticing some thimbles there, was inspired with the thought that her thimble with her name engraved upon it might identify her—only—"if"—she was nervously seeking it—"yes, I have it." It was sufficient evidence, and the clerk laughed at her timid anxiety.

"O, I can never wait to get home before I read this letter, for it is from the old home town, South. Looking about for a suitable place to read it, she stepped into a quiet little chocolate stand and ordered a cup. She lost no time in opening the letter. Sipping some of the chocolate, she unfolded the letter. Ah! it was written in an unfamiliar hand, and a well remembered law firm's name was at the top corners. It commenced:

"DEAR MADAM:—

"This is to inform you that two hundred dollars have been turned over to us for you. It is your share of the residue of your late parents'



much encumbered estate. The check for it awaits your order.

“Very truly,  
“JONES & JOHNSON.”

Annie Miller Wood sat dumbfounded at the news, forgetting chocolate and everything else in the world, but that the parents were dead! “Yes, they’ve been dead over two years, or the estate could not have all been settled. I suppose those mortgages hurried the settlement.” A waiter was now moving near her and asked quietly, “Anything else, madam?”

She understood that to mean “We would like the table, madam,” and swallowed the chocolate, for her throat was very dry.

There was deep regret in Annie’s heart over the death of her parents! They had cast her off, to be sure, and had long been dead to her. She had never indulged in bitterness towards them. Exactly like them, she had been gifted with stubbornness and strong self will. Doubtless she would have overcome these traits and sought a reconciliation if her husband had been other than what they had been so certain he would become.

“Alas, the estrangement was now beyond reconciliation!” and Annie grieved over it sadly. She did not see Joseph that evening, and resolved to keep the day’s revelations to herself. She should need money too badly this spring to risk losing it through him.

He did not question by what means the bill of fare had been improved. The table did not bother him, anyhow, for he drank at saloons

where a lunch could be eaten with every drink a man bought, "and the family could skirmish," so far as he cared.

"It'll do 'em good to forage, you see!" he thought many a time to himself.

He took his usual outing now and then to another part of the city "to git away from her eternal nagging," he said, where he had a day or two of immense pleasure with congenial people—till his money was exhausted. Then he discovered they were not visible to him, and he sneaked back home till he could make another raise of coin. At such returns he appeared deeply dejected in spirits, because, as he announced, "just missed a fine opportunity!"

Annie was fortunate enough to receive the two hundred dollar check from the South one day while he was away, and put it in a nearby saving's bank to use as she herself should find need of it. She began on it very soon, too.

On returning from one of these "business absences"—a rather prolonged one, he found what he hoped to find—the expected event over! A nurse was in his rooms. The apprenticed girl, glad to be earning money in the dull season of dressmaking, was installed cook and companion to the little daughter.

She had decoyed the child, along with one or two of the others down stairs, to the park, where they were to pass the day. A well filled dinner basket was taken along, and some change lay hidden in the apprenticed girl's pocket to buy sweets and sodas or lemonade at the stands near

by, when the interests of the little ones should begin to lag in the after part of the long day.

Banging the door shut, Joseph Wood came and stood by the bed of his exhausted and sleeping wife. His face was white as marble, with an air of grave solemnity and respectful anxiety! She slept on, to all appearances. The nurse prepared him some coffee and toast, and while he partook of it, related to him:

"The baby that came last night to you was a son, and has been carried out to Graceland but a couple hours ago!"

He finished his luncheon in apparent sorrow over the loss of another son; looked in at his seemingly somnolent wife for a moment, and retired to his usual afternoon slumber in the parlor.

Annie was very nervous, very feverish for several days, and the nurse and the physician were anxious about her.

The novelty of the park was beginning to pall upon the children. They had ridden in other children's carts, whose acquaintance they had made that day; eaten luncheon often and often. They had played "driving horse" with the white cotton strings the apprentice had got out of Mrs. Wood's rag bag before starting on their outing to the park.

Their caretaker was tired enough of her undertaking, and was feeling about as irritable as her charges, when the little Wood girl began screaming and kicking with might and main. The widow's child coming near at the moment

approached her little friend with the remnant of her apple which she held out to her. "Go way, I'll scratch you!" and she promptly did it, with zealous hand.

"I want to go home! I want my mamma!" and she screamed sharply, by this time beside herself with rage. "I will go home! I want my mamma! Go way, you mean old girl! I hate you, too! The widow's daughter was now screeching with anger.

This last was addressed to the girl, who was dragging her along towards the lemonade stand. The man at the stand prepared the drinks, and also laid the nickle's worth of candy out in a very attractive pile where he knew the little ones would see it. That beautiful candy and the three glasses of lemonade soon tranquilized the hasty temper and throbbing hearts of the children. Baby Wood offered one of her bits of sweets to the little friend, as a flag of truce; the other took it, though she had plenty of her own, to confirm the declaration of peace, and hostilities ended. Their caretaker was embarrassed by the noisy affair, especially when she heard a policeman of the park say to the lemonade man who had restored peace,

"Give sis one scratch for luck, huh?"

"Reckon that's right—pretty spunky."

"Didn't spike that kid's lemonade, did ye?" banteringly suggested the "cop."

"The gal don't need extry sperrits. She'll make the fur fly when she's big enough, I betcher." They both soon forgot the little fight,

slyly commenting on the combatant's pretty caretaker, and she was happy to have quieted the little ones. "O, I wush I could go home right now!" she was thinking.



## XXV.

## NEW TRIALS—HOME TO DIE.

The long, long sleep that held the tired senses of Annie Miller Wood, after the hours of untold suffering and battle with death, was a merciful tonic. But a fever and delirium had been present part of the time before this quiet sleep had set in, and the nurse dreaded the awakening. There might be a moment's half consciousness, and then death might follow this last shock of struggling life! So she and the physician and his wife were alert to the slightest noticeable change in the patient.

The little daughter was made to believe that "mamma is uptown yet," and kept down stairs with the widow's children several days. But when the apprenticed girl and new cook found a bit of leisure, she escorted them all over to the park. The two belligerents of the first outing had learned the limitations of each other's forbearance, and there was no more kicking and screaming if a difference of opinion occurred between them. A quick jerk of a dress and a rush to the caretaker ended the matter, till something else attracted them.

The doctor's wife managed to be present, along with the widow and nurse, when the long

sleep ended. They knew it was near the end by the fading out of all bloom from the sick one's face and the lowering temperature and slowing pulse. So when her eyes opened, they were kindly met by joyful smiles and greetings.

"Well, Mrs. Wood, you've had a long, refreshing sleep, I'm sure you're better," said the doctor's wife, shifting the pillows.

"Thank you, I believe I am better," said Annie as the nurse held a cup of chicken broth to her lips with a tube in it, and was delighted to note that she seemed to relish it and look brighter for it.

The convalescence was slow; good days were followed by bad days for some time. Days of quiet were for Annie too heavenly! It was so perfectly sublime to lie abed and rest, and not even think! It was so fine to know that one has money to pay for this enforced leisure, a thing that could not have been possible to her but for that check from the law firm, South.

The comfort that her parents could not know of her misfortunes now was stealing into her resigned soul! Though she was yet sadly mindful that they were gone forever!

But O, the joy at being able again to read! Such long, long years had passed since she dared take a half day for reading! Not even on the blessed Sabbath had she dared to read anything, but a dressmaker's column or so! and that only because on the morrow a difficult dress had to be devised and cut out.

At last she could embroider a bit, so she finished a piece that a liberal customer had told her,

"No hurry; take your time." Now that time license had expired, and the dainty bit had to be finished. Then her darling child had to be furnished with a summer outfit. All her dresses were outgrown or worn out. The old hurry was quietly but surely insinuating itself into her life. The two hundred dollars were about exhausted. Just a few remained of it! Before she had quite got into her break-neck speed, in her race-for-life gait, of care and work, the doctor's wife brought a charming friend of hers to talk about having German lessons with Mrs. Wood, and to take her out for a little airing, as she said.

They drove all the six mile drive out to Grace-land. The tiny unnamed son had been buried in the same grave with the first one, for they had bought one grave there. The doctor's wife had brought many flowers from her home, and now gave them to Annie for the grave of her two dear little sons.

Annie Miller Wood inhaled the gloriously fresh air with great joy! She felt as if her lungs could never get enough of it. Everything she passed in the long drive took on an exaggerated magnificence and beauty that she had never before noticed in them!

Really she did not remember, in the delightful present, what a very little of the city she had ever seen under any condition. Her days in the West had been long days of toil, not half long enough for the insupportable burdens she had had to carry through them.

Oh, she inhaled the sweet, the blessed air in great draughts! It was so good to be able to

be out again in the heavenly sunshine. Ah, and she loved the sweet woman who had given her this unspeakable pleasure! She spoke little during the drive home. She was too happy.

Her sublime ecstasy reminded her of the very same feelings expressed by Mary Stuart, when she had been brought into the garden of Fotheringay Castle to meet Queen Elizabeth, after her years and years imprisonment. She could have easily shouted out the very same words that the luckless Queen had uttered, with her eyes towards the blue heavens, so long shut away from her.

The ladies in the carriage noted her ecstatic countenance, and quietly respected her emotions, without in the least being able to comprehend their depths and the reason for them. Air and sunshine were such every day, commonplace things, how could they understand several years' dearth of them to the woman beside them! They had time, every day, to drive out. They had houses with verandas, and air and light in plenty from many windows.

Reluctantly she left the carriage on arriving home, to climb the narrow, suffocating stairway leading to narrow and more suffocating rooms. But she had promised the doctor's wife to try to take an hour's walk and fresh air in the nearby park every day, and fully believed she might make it possible for herself and the child.

In the parlor her husband was awaiting supper. Annie's reputation, as an extraordinarily good and reliable dressmaker spread rapidly, and she soon had a select *clientele*. Select, because

the widow knew how, by extravagant charges, to keep away the poorer class of customers. The dressmaker now found she could not do her cooking and housework with her increased sewing. The clever widow, always obliging, and with an eye on any dollar she could lure her way, proposed to give a plain midday meal to the Wood family, as she now kept a cook.

So it was accepted, at a reasonable honorarium. Joseph Wood was always a courteous person, no matter to what condition drink had brought him, this happy trait of his character always remained. Talk, or as he termed it, "chatter," was not his "forte," so the precise state of his mind was seldom rashly revealed. This trait owed its origin in a very short and constrained tongue, generally known as "tongue-tied," as much as to the very silent family of his ancestors. A very safe and fortunate inheritance!

Annie slept well the night after her outing. Indeed insomnia had had a peremptory check in the month's enforced indulgence in sleep she had just passed through. As a result, she again took up her work with a lighter heart than she had ever brought to it before. She had become more familiar with the troublesome complexities of the business now, therefore got on better with it.

She was glad to see the cheery faces of cultured, refined and fortunate women who came to her. And she loved to handle the rich and dainty fabrics they brought her, out of which to create exquisite robes or gowns. She was much the vogue and complimented and told that she was



certainly talented in her particular line of business.

She did not tell them that the talent had been developed through the terrible school of overwork and want! Nor how nearly it cost her life, even now, to cater to the different tastes of different people. Patterns were hard to get in those days, and the price an item worth saving, so she generally studied a fashion plate right sharply, and proceeded to cut it, with genius as the guide.

The draped overskirt and polonaise were bits of art work, very beautiful or very ugly, according to its successful or its unsuccessful manipulation. And Annie had probably trained her eyes and mind much in art galleries abroad in proportions, measurements and beauty, however unconsciously, without intention or design towards dressmaking.

Life was only just begun then. Love and hope were so lofty, so grand! They had not yet bedraggled their snowy wings in the black mire of bitter disappointment, wrought by Drink!

So passed the next few years with Annie Wood. Sometimes Joseph left off drink for a time, and tried various employments. Tried hard! But the drink habit was too well established in his weak nature to assure reform to his unhappy and ruined life! He fell before the demon temptation so often that, discouraged, he finally gave it up, and with one unhappy "grand drunk," which disabled him for the rest of his

days on earth, never even attempted reform again!

During these later years, there came other disagreeable experiences into the life of the luckless Annie Wood! The first one was when she tried to take the hour's recreation every day, as she had promised the doctor's wife. She certainly felt much refreshed to drop her tedious work and hurry into the fresh air for one gloriously free hour. She was punctual and conscientious in her observance of it.

With her little one, who also badly needed the outing, she always hastened to the nearest park. After a few mornings she saw that a gamy looking chap, with a cane, a high hat, and plaid trousers, was making the same tour, at the same hour she made hers every day.

She noted, too, that he was constantly using his handkerchief, suspiciously like she had heard people of a certain class did in flirtation's converse. She felt uncomfortable; and further on she also noted that two other young men were watching her, and this curiously behaved creature.

She took the little girl by the hand, and went further into the park, and out at another gate into the street. She met the trio in the street; their ill concealed, smirking smiles, as they impudently looked at her, made her very unhappy.

She did not go out the next day, but the following one hastened out, very much needing her "walk and air remedy," as she regarded it. And again saw the plaid trousered man. He showed plainly that he felt flattered at seeing her, believ-

ing she had come purposely to meet him! He was delighted.

She always endeavored not to see him, which he construed into a pretty bit of coquetry. She was truly embarrassed.

"How the mischief has this thing come about, I should like to know! I have not done the slightest imprudent thing!" and Annie took the child out of the park.

She had not the slightest notion that she was attractive enough to be followed about, as were some beautiful women she had read of, and was positive she had done no thoughtless, imprudent thing. She felt offended and alarmed.

She told the experiences to the widow. She advised remaining away from the park and off the street a week or so, for some gossiping women in their quarter were already saying when Annie started out for her walk, "See! the dressmaker is going to the park to meet her beau," for they had seen the interest the tall hat man was taking in her movements.

"But why does the man act so?" asked Annie, ashamed and vexed.

"Well, Mrs. Wood, there are a lot of loafers over there at that saloon," and she pointed at the one diagonally across from them, "who have had their eyes on you for a long time. They say you're too nice to have married Joseph Wood, and that you hain't his wife, mebbe! So they have made up their minds to find you out. They say you're too pretty, too well educated to have hitched up with him, if you're all right, and they say it may be that you're a little 'fly' is the reason

he drinks. See! Just stay out of reach of 'em. Don't go to the park any more. It's my brother who was with t'other young man you saw, a-watching to see Mr. Tallhat get snubbed, and I reckon they're perfectly satisfied now!"

While the women talked in the business room down stairs the man under discussion passed along on the opposite side of the street, using his handkerchief rather prominently, as usual. Wiping his mouth, then shaking it out and touching his eyes with it. The widow drew back out of sight and laughingly said to Mrs. Wood:

"See, he means he is weeping for a sight of you! Poor thing!" and she laughed outright, till he had reluctantly passed on, lightly tapping his cane on the sidewalk. Both women were thinking that he was growing very bold and impertinent, and wondered what they ought to do.

Annie burst out crying, and was very angry, hurt and mortified. "Whatever can I do? What imprudent thing have I done?"

"What ever can you do?" said the widow. "Git a divorce, that's what! and that is the very easiest thing in all the world to do. I would not live twenty-four hours with any drunken bloat the Lord ever made!"

"O, please don't talk about it! Don't you know if I got a divorce from my husband it would only be putting a stone into the hands of the crazy mob with which they could better kill me? No, no, I shall not ask for a divorce. I shall plod along, doing the best I can, leaving the result in the hands of the Lord," said Annie, weep-

ing hysterically. "But I wish I were already dead!"

"Now, Mrs. Wood, don't take on so! It is darkest just before the dawn, you know. And you've got such lovely friends; such nice customers! Don't mind a few blackguards! Why, one of my dear lost husband's friends, a married man, used to be urging favors on me, with an air as if saying, 'You understand, my dear.' Well, I couldn't stand his meanness any longer. So one day he was slyly doing this insinuating trick, and I turned on him in his wife's presence and yelled out, 'Jim Work, you're the nastiest beast I ever met!' You may be sure he hated me, but he let me alone after that, forever! So did his silly wife, for he fixed the matter with her, by saying that I wanted to blackmail him!"

A few days' attention to her difficult work, and the friendly considerations of these worthy customers, soon cleared away her humiliation, and sunshine broke out from behind the clouds. She had been strengthened by her trial. But her health was giving out, and she had not money nor time for a vacation. Again was that nightmare of insomnia threatening her!

Providentially perhaps, a letter from Joseph's mother reached them, after a tour of search for them in the city, entreating them to come back to York State, to her, at the old home. And with it, another letter from Joseph's cousin Alice, Ned's wife, from the South. The last one contained fifty dollars to assist them to reach his mother, who she had heard was very feeble, and desired to see Joseph once more. Alice had got



their place of residence by the merest chance from Jones & Johnson, Attorneys.

To say they were glad to return East would not half tell the delight they felt! They could hardly wait for Alice to finish the beautiful creation she was constructing for a rather swell wedding on the West Side. They wrote that they were coming home very soon, and the hope it inspired in the failing old mother, doubtless, kept her alive a little longer.

Ah, she loved her son Joseph! And never knew half his shortcomings. He had neglected her, to be sure, but of course there must have been letters lost between them, and he was coming home now!

It was a sad homecoming! The patient, good old mother lived but a very few days. She seemed pleased to hold her hands on her little granddaughter's head, muttering loving blessings. She could hardly let Joseph out of her sight a moment; her grand boy, who once was so handsome in the beautiful uniform of his beloved country! His present appearance was, of course, caused by a cold and travel!

"When the light went out of her fine old eyes, she still had them turned towards him, and the fast palsyng hands sought his swollen, nervously trembling ones. So was finished the drama of life for one who laid Henry on the sacrificial altar of her loved country's mistakes!

She was laid beside the dear soldier boy one evening, to sleep till the Resurrection Morn, and near her adored husband.

Ex-Lieutenant Joseph Wood followed his

mother in a very few weeks, and was laid beside her and Henry, near the father, in the town of their nativity. All the honor due an ex-soldier's burial was shown by the friends of his youth, and the admirers of the handsome, patriotic young man.

Annie was long an invalid. But the quiet of the dear little rustic home, now hers, and the goodness of these new friends brought her once again back to life; slowly, O so slowly! The child grew to strength and comeliness at once, and was a comfort to the tried mother.

Soon a rumor, then some papers with the seal of the United States on them, reached Annie Miller Wood, notifying her that an accrued back pension of a thousand five hundred dollars had been secured her. Oh, what a boon! There was a smaller one for the child. Each would have a small monthly pension; she for life, the child for a few years yet.

## XXVI.

## SOUTH—PLANTING IVY.

The pension agent North had secured a grant of a small pension for Henry Wood's mother, it being shown that he would have been her only support for her old age. At the time of her death, the papers had passed through the offices at Washington. And the accrued amount made a goodly sum for Mrs. Wood's heir, the heir being Joseph Wood's daughter.

After some months of quiet in the cozy old home, Annie and the child went South to visit her earlier friends and cousin, by her marriage to Alice's cousin, Joseph Wood. It was truly a pleasant reunion with them. The family enjoyed their old friend Annie ever so much now, as they had when they met her in London. There were both sad and pleasant reminiscences to talk over. The wedding in Westminster and Ned's death. To Rene there was one very painful one, though it was not talked of at all.

It was in London she had heard, for just a minute, the grand tenor voice, recalling that of Captain Budd Stone, only it showed more culture, greater range, more pathos. Yet it must have been his, she was always thinking, always sure. So London—that word London always

brought vividly before her the lover of her youth, the magnificent, the handsome man and a grand tenor!

And now, that the long lost letter had been found several years ago, explaining the sudden desertion at the last minute, he did not appear so very culpable, and the old love of her youth returned. The bitterness of the intervening years faded away from the disappointment, and her character was rounding out, gentle and adorable, and she seemed more attractive now.

One day she carried Annie and her child, in the phaeton, several miles away to visit her old home. The house was unoccupied, save by an old negro couple in the south end of the cook's quarters. It had not been painted for many years, till one could not say what color it had boasted in its palmy days. Annie wept as she stood in the well remembered rooms of her childhood, of her youth, of life's first ambitions! And she remembered well the east veranda, now rickety and fast crumbling apart, where she had last seen her mother alive, as she went away to study in Germany. How vivid the picture!

She was overcome with her emotions and was obliged to sit a while on one of the old time settees on the veranda. Renewing the tour of the old mansion, climbing, almost, over piles of fallen plaster, she started up the front stairway and at the first landing came face to face with a full length portrait of herself! The child also saw it and it seemed to her to be no stranger,

for she saw its like every day in the mirror at home. She resembled her mother.

She was told that this was her mother when she was a child. She looked at the portrait and at the mother rather incredulously. The old presses in the upstairs apartments contained some old hats and cast off clothing, some cloaks and shoes, mouldy and faded dresses that had belonged to her when a child. Ah, the parents had cast her off in anger, but they could not part with these old possessions of their headstrong and rebellious daughter.

In the parents' room she found a trunk she recognized as the old letter box, as they had called it. It had been well rummaged by sight-seers. She arranged for a bonfire of all these things afterwards with the late purchaser of the property. Then she looked on the frescoes of the old parlor, where cobwebs were filling the corners, and the open fireplace was floored with the egg shells and débris of chimney swallows' nests of many seasons. The frescoes were not badly faded, only in some places the crumbling plaster had left an eagle broken in two, or a decapitated huntsman still aiming his fowling piece at some game, in a very awkwardly painted copse of trees, beyond a pond of water, red tinted from the rising sun.

From the large old plantation house they drove to the burying ground of the new church, where the parents had been buried, and their graves marked by an appropriate granite column, according to their living plans. This was the end of it all! And Annie sat long on the



sod of the graves, repentant and sorrowful, because she had made their last days, days of gloom and bitterness.

Arriving again at the Liscomb plantation, they found the guests they were expecting, already come. These were two young ladies Rene had met in Dresden. They were Americans, also from the South, but refugees to Europe during the last years of the Civil War. They lived now in New York with their brother's family. He was an important agent of a cotton and tobacco business. Accomplished particularly in music were these new guests. One of them sang.

In the evening they played and sang to their entertainers much of the new and best popular music.

The Cercle, grown now to be quite a social event, met next day at the plantation. The sweet, sociable members quite charmed the New York ladies. There was quite a French colony, one could imagine, by the animated chatter in that language, sometimes overtopping all other sounds.

It was not long before Annie had met all her old acquaintances still living in the South. She loved this land of her nativity. This land of strong, spirited, brave men of character! This land, whose war had developed marvellous characteristics, even in her women, now no longer the rich and helpless pets of society! But she had been weaned away from it by a hard school! It was here she had met the robust, jolly and reckless Lieutenant, who won her youth's first

love! Whom she had sought to serve faithfully, with her inherited German traits of domestic love of home and family, hardly appreciated.

Sadly she saw and understood that much as the North talked about the brotherly union of the two factions of the late Civil War, there was some poetic illusion, a somewhat romantic ardor coloring the grave facts. From things she observed, and certainly not with a prejudiced mind, she thought that but the touch, one day, to an overcharged cloud of error, or mistake, there would flash the accumulated prejudices into an earthquake of vastly more harm than the earlier tempest.

One day they were all out in the air to sketch. A small, dense thicket of wild plum trees stood at one side of a field of cotton. On another side were small groves of young pines, cedars, persimmons, oaks and some sassafras. There were many species of the oak. Grape vines reached, in great profusions, from tree to tree, as if to chain in the young forest with their luxurious growth of branches. Ivy, poison ivy, draped the trunks of every dead tree, from bottom to top, in the heavier and larger forest near by.

The stony, red-brown roads were edged with a tangle of plants and vines, among which just now predominated the graceful golden rod. It had possessed itself of every bit of available space on hillside, roadside, uncultivated meadow, and in the sparse grass of the large oak parks about the houses. It was in its prime at this sea-

son of the year, and its yellow was the keynote of the landscape.

It was puzzling to know where to begin, so these amateur artists began, each according to her own special taste. The trees and shrubs growing in an irregular line, away off in the distance marked the course of a beautiful brook, that was fed by friendly, lively, little spring branches along its route. Cool, because of the verdure overlapping their waters most of the way, and also from these springs from surprising sources.

They found a tiny waterfall of the same charming brook, and although it fell gradually over two low terraces, it had hollowed out a large, deep basin, the most perfect bathing resort in the vicinity. The sun had a good chance to keep its rather cold water in just the right temperature here. The negroes had built many a cabin above its coolest places, so had delicious water to use for the simple dipping it up with the gourds they had grown in the gardens.

One of the most delightful afternoons the guests and family at Major Liscomb's and the young people of the neighboring plantations had together was when they started for this pool. Each was garbed in whatever fell to her hand of cast offs from her wardrobe. So it was the very drollest procession of bathers eye ever beheld!

Will Quinell's little ones and wife headed it as chaperones. It was his assistant who helped teach the ladies and children how to swim. And this man's inspiration and arm that threw small dead pine trunks into the pool for them to cling

to or hang over in practicing the art. The remembrance of it caused them much amusement for a long time. The Major and his wife enjoyed their capers, and even the waters, as fine sport, and laughed over it whenever any illusion was made to "that time at the pool."

Alice and Rene were proud of their amateur pictures, and the studio was one of the show places at the plantation when the maid, Luce, was inclined to put it in order. Rene gave each of the two girls from New York a spray of acorns painted on canvas that they had enthusiastically praised. They declared she could sell hundreds of copies of it, if she would, in the city for the Christmas trade.

One afternoon Alice was with her Cousin Annie in the great lumbering swing under the oaks in front of the house, and Annie, in exuberance of spirits, laid down her magazine and commenced:

"O, Cousin Alice, how very good it was of you to send me that fifty dollars to Chicago! And then to ask us down to the plantation for this lovely visit! I only wish I could ever do something for you all! But you will not let me, I fear."

"O, yes, I will, too! But you've made right much pleasure for us in coming here, I assure you. Cousin Annie, you don't understand how sad and lonely we've been since dear Ned left us! We miss him so!"

"Don't I know? I know! Yes, I know. And just think! I lost my boys, both my boys!" She might have added such another tale of woe to

these losses that Alice would have thought her quite deniented, and could not have believed it. She had kept most all of these sorrows hidden in the past; they should remain buried! That was best.

"Well, Cousin Alice, what I was going to ask by way of favor is this. The girls want Rene and me to go to New York this winter to visit them, but we could not leave father and mother alone here with only the servants. Would you be willing to come and stay a few weeks with them? Bring the little one of course."

"I shall gladly come and do everything I can for their comfort. Count on me!"

There were many delightful drives during their last days together, and some pretty sketches made of red sumach, brown-eyed Susans, pokeberry and alderberry. Each one of them wanted to paint the old lone chimney, all that was left after a fire had consumed a cabin, down near the old château. It was sketched also. Rene suggested one day:

"Let us have an Ivy Day party. I have grown quite a vine from a tiny spray off the grave of Mendelssohn, which I got at Berlin."

"Aha!" cried a voice. "*Drei Mark als Geldstrafe ist gegen das Vergehen der youngen Amerikanerin aufgelegt!*"

"No, no! I did not take the ivy. It was given me by the sexton of the cemetery. So you cannot fine me for a misdemeanor. I can keep my seventy-three and a quarter cents!" said Rene exultingly.

"Let us plant a vine of that ivy at the base of



that old chimney, with ceremony, girls," proposed Alice, "and let Rene do the talking, for I should not feel so sure about the getting of that ivy, you see, and she seems very certain that she did not sneak it."

All laughed and proceeded to cross-question her, but Rene adhered closely to her declaration that the sexton gave her the ivy in the cemetery in Berlin, Germany, and from it she had grown a goodly vine.

It was arranged that the two New York guests should sing something appropriate and the invited guests of the neighborhood should partake with them an ice and cake in the open air under the grand old oaks.

The planting of the ivy was done in the presence of their most intimate friends, the Quinell and the Jonas Wilson families, the New York guests, Annie Wood and the Liscomb family. Rene's words were spoken with clearness and neat gravity as follows:

"Dear Friends: We are assembled this glorious autumn afternoon to commemorate the happy event of our reunion once more in the dear old Southland, after our heartrending sacrifices to war. This ivy which we plant is our memorial! It is from the grave of the great Mendelssohn, at Berlin, Germany."

Each lady present sprinkled a handful of soil upon the root. Then the gentlemen present finished the planting of the vine.

Singing finished the ceremony.

## XXVII.

## IN NEW YORK—A WEDDING.

The young ladies from New York City and Annie Miller Wood from the same State, took leave of their friends on the plantation, with the hope of meeting them very soon again. The journey North was without event of importance, and not far from the suburbs of the city Annie and her daughter changed cars for another road that passed their town.

It was a pretty little town, now and henceforth, to be considered her home town. She hastened to visit the cemetery, and knelt beside the grave of her beloved husband—more sorrowfully mourned than if no misery and bitterness had ever come between them.

Indeed here the thought of him only as her first and last lover, the handsome lieutenant, the dashy, bright boy in the United States uniform, the father of her beautiful daughter, now weeping with her. For his sake, and for Ned Liscomb's sake, she venerated the memory of Sergeant Henry Wood, whose grave she also visited, as well as that of the mother-in-law, on the same lot.

She was soon busily occupied with the work of preparing the wardrobe of her child and herself, in view of their coming winter South. The

widow, her friend in Chicago, was coming to live in her home during her absence, along with a couple of lodgers who had been in the house for years.

The widow had given up her business, and had come to take a rest, and to visit New York City, as she had never seen it. The two friends had a few outings, and much reminiscing together before Mrs. Wood's return to the South.

Alice and Rene were not long in getting off to New York City after the arrival of Annie. Arriving at their station, they were met by their friends and escorted to the delightful home of their brother, who was a very important agent of tobacco and cotton companies, a long time resident of the city.

Being late in the winter already, their outings were few. One was to the sanitarium on the Hudson, where they and their parents had so anxiously watched over Ned and fanned to life the faint spark of vitality in his wrecked body after Chickamauga Creek.

A visit to the great Catholic Cathedral, to the grandest hotels of the whole world, to studios, to see exhibitions of new pictures; to bazaars, to dressmaking parlors, to theater and concerts. And then to hear grand opera! which the Liscomb ladies had not enjoyed since they last heard one in Europe. The anticipation was a joy in itself, for they had time to contemplate it for an impatient few days before the event.

Rene was studying the programme of singers, and read the name of the grand tenor, Sig. Paulus Mascori. She was thrilled with emo-

tion! Now she could soon know if he were really Captain Budd Stone, her one time betrothed lover. She hardly heard the first singers, in her fever of anxiety to see and hear the grand tenor.

When he appeared, and the audience made it known how he was appreciated, what a favorite he was, Rene could not conceal her excitement. And when he sang, all doubts of his identity with her earlier lover vanished. She joined the rest in claiming an encore.

She and Alice turned to their friends, saying enthusiastically in one breath:

"O, he is grand! What a superb voice! What a fine, handsome man he is!"

When he was again off the stage, one of the New York girls said to Rene:

"I must tell you about him. It is told that once he had some sort of matrimonial experience, very romantic, and very tragic, and withal very mysterious, in his younger days. And that is the reason he has never married. It almost wrecked him for several years."

"Really, that is interesting!" said Alice. "Tell us more about it. Do you know more about him?"

"No, for another tale, a contradiction in some measure of the one of his marriage, relates that something happened to prevent the wedding—the interference of her brother, or some such thing. You know, there are always stories circulated, to gratify the mad public, when a great actor or a grand tenor appears. Simply advertising schemes,"

Rene heard little of the opera, but she was familiar with it, having heard it before.

Alice and Rene kept their own council about the past of Sig. Mascori.

That night when the others slept, Rene took the old letter that the silver ice pitcher had so long preserved against fire and destruction, from its aged envelope to assure herself it had not vanished forever, and pressed it to her lips again and again.

Next morning she scanned the early newspaper to find out at which hotel the opera company was entertained, and accordingly addressed a very short missive. She enclosed the old, old letter of explanation from Budd Stone, saying:

"DEAR SIR—

"Your letter of ten years ago only reached me three years ago. Your whereabouts were unknown to me until last evening at the opera. You are forgiven!

"As ever,

"IRENE LISCOMB."

She gave her present street and number in the city, mailed the letter herself. In a couple days, when the others were out for their morning's airing, Sig. Paulus Mascori called upon and renewed his betrothal with his former promised bride, as Budd Stone.

Not long afterwards, he called again, accompanied by his best friend. The family of the New York girls, Rene and Alice, went with Sig.



Mascori to "the Little Church Around the Corner," where there was a quiet wedding.

As soon as the grand tenor's engagement with the opera company was ended, one of the very happiest couples in the whole world sailed away to pass a summer among the English Lakes. Then the marriage was published.

**THE END.**

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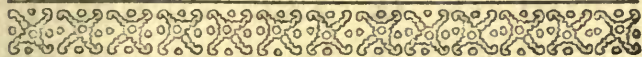
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